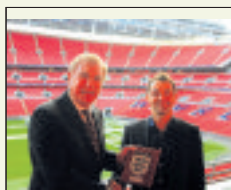


# thechronicle

## Pitching in

Wembley date as football league wins FA award

Page 2



## Worth weight

How wedding pics led to the pounds dropping off

Page 2



## Scholars' joy

Chasetown take the honours on derby day

Page 44



## Ritual to yield a fruitful harvest

THE traditional custom of wassailing is being held within the grounds of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust's orchard to encourage a good fruit harvest for the new year.

The trust is staging its annual apple tree ritual on Sunday, January 8, from 4pm at its Wolsley Centre base. The headquarters is located on the A51 at Rugeley.

At the start of the free event, visitors will be entertained old English-style by the Lichfield Morris Men, Beggar's Oak Clog Dancers before the Armitage Mummies.

Revellers will take part in ancient customs aimed at appeasing the tree spirits and encouraging a good yield of fruit, including pouring cider onto tree roots.

### Orchard

Event organiser Sam Pachner said: "We will start off with some wonderful traditional entertainment, and then as it gets darker we will make a procession into the orchard to 'wake up' all the fruit trees.

"The wassail is a wonderful family-orientated event and visitors will be able to learn all about some fascinating ancient traditions while keeping warm with our hot apple punch."

The origins of the ritual of apple tree wassailing lies far back in the Celtic past.

It and has been recorded in all the apple tree growing regions of England.

## WI looks to form a choir

BURNTWOOD Women's Institute could establish a new choir in 2012 after members formed a temporary singing group for their Christmas party.

Veronica Box said choir members who were in full voice at the festive bash wanted to carry on singing next year.



Artworx gallery owner Jonathan Locke with some of Rolf Harris's paintings on display

## Display of Rolf's artwork proves to be a big draw

STAFF at a Cannock art gallery can certainly tell what it is – a hugely popular collection of Rolf Harris's artwork.

A year after being unveiled, the limited edition collection of the Australian artist's work at the Artworx gallery, in Avon Road, is proving as popular as ever.

Rolf has visited Artworx before and gallery manager Ashley Corrigan said his work was proving to be a big draw.

"We're really pleased with the

response," she said. "With it being in an area which hasn't got much arty pieces, the response has been amazing."

"People come to see it from Lichfield, the other side of Shrewsbury or Birmingham and even from Stoke."

In total the gallery has more than 200 pieces on display, including sculptures and glassware.

For more information visit [www.artworx.co.uk](http://www.artworx.co.uk) or call 01543 502971.

## Hundreds lose their jobs at Amazon

HUNDREDS of workers were laid off at Amazon's distribution centre in Rugeley just days before Christmas – with some reportedly told via a rollout on the shop floor.

The company said the positions were temporary but some shocked workers believed they had secure contracts.

The online retailer opened its huge new centre at Towers Business Park, Wheelhouse Lane, in September, announcing 900 jobs.

The move to the town was widely welcomed as a much-needed jobs boost. However, many of those posts turned out to be temporary as Amazon revealed that 900 workers would be employed only at peak times.

### Devastated

In a separate round of recruitment by Randstad jobs agency, hundreds of extra staff were taken on to cope with the Christmas demand.

One employee, a single mother from Rugeley, said: "People are devastated. It's awful not knowing whether you'll still have a job tomorrow. Calling out people's names at the end of the day like that is degrading."

Amazon spokesman Ben Howes said the agency had recruited hundreds of additional people specifically for the Christmas period, and as this period was coming to an end, so was the need for such a high number of staff.

Reaction - see page 3

## Crews tackle manhole fire

A FIRE in an underground electricity junction box led to part of Cannock town centre to be cordoned off.

Crews found black smoke rising from a manhole cover in Market Place at 8.30pm on Christmas Day.

The area was cordoned off and the road closed to traffic.

# PLUG IS PULLED ON HEALTH CENTRE BID

By Tim Spiers

## PLANS to combine GP surgeries in a new multi-purpose health centre in Cannock have been scrapped.

The proposed three-storey Mill Street development was first mooted four years ago.

Now, after years of public meetings, consultations and design changes, South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust has pulled the plug on the project.

It said a change in the political and economic landscape was behind the decision, which one campaigner for the health centre called "a disgrace".

Chief executive of the Staffordshire Cluster of NHS trusts Graham Urwin outlines the reasons behind the decision in an e-mail seen by The Chronicle dated November 28. The news has only now come to light.

Writing to Nicholas Pountney, chairman of Staffordshire Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), Mr Urwin said the decision followed a PCT Cluster board meeting earlier in the month.

He said: "This resulted in the board having to take the difficult decision to abort the scheme and to review the needs of primary care service across Cannock in line with

the wider discussion across all healthcare services in Stafford and Cannock.

"In order for us to carry out our responsibilities to deliver high quality, efficient services, it is incumbent upon commissioners to ensure that all such investments demonstrate value for money and are supportive to the wider healthcare system."

Cannock Chase councillor Muriel Davis, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said the local authority supported the plans and said she was as much in the dark as anyone about the reasons behind the decision.

### Exciting

"We've written to the PCT and we haven't had a reply," Councillor Davis said. "It's very disappointing as it looked like an exciting project and there is no obvious back-up plan."

"We're concerned for the people of Cannock as they were promised a health centre."

Up to 10,000 patients had been expected to use the Mill Street facility, which would also have encompassed physical therapy, speech and mother and baby units, as well as GP surgeries. Eveline James, who lives nearby, attended all but one of the

numerous public meetings held regarding the scheme since 2007. She called on the PCT to tell "the truth" about the real reasons why the project had been abandoned.

"We want to know why, after four years of planning and goodness knows how much expense, this has hit the deck," she said.

"Economics isn't the excuse at all – that's been the case for a long while – but Burntwood and Huntington have still had health centres built in the past four years."

"We're devastated it's been aborted and also that it's been done so quietly – it's a disgrace and it doesn't make any sense."

Images of the proposed site, due to be located at the former Hi-Q Tyre Services building, were released in 2009 but last year the scheme was thrown into doubt when the Cannock Chase Commissioning Consortium advised it be abandoned.

A spokesman for the GP-led consortium said there wasn't enough interest from Cannock GPs to move to the proposed site, but added the project could still be resurrected if conditions were right.

"We'd reached a point where it would have just been built for the sake of being built," the spokesman said.

"If there had been enough interest then we would have supported it."



An artist's impression of how the health centre



The proposed look of the clinic's inside layout

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# Pitch Invasion at Wembley as award handed over

A FOOTBALL company with links in Cheslyn Hay has become the first in the country to receive a new FA accreditation.

Pitch Invasion, which runs a six-a-side league at Cheslyn Hay Sport and Community High School, now has Small Sided Football Accreditation, as announced by the football governing body.

The FA's director of football development, Sir Trevor Brooking, invited staff from Pitch Invasion to Wembley to receive the award.

Pitch Invasion formed in 1998 and has 90 leagues around the UK providing five, six and seven-a-side football.

In March of this year the company controversially pipped rival firm Leisure Leagues to be awarded the Cheslyn Hay contract for the school's new facilities, which were opened by England goalkeeper Joe Hart.

The FA's new accreditation is designed to reward excellent in the industry and assist organisations in raising standards and

developing business structures. Andrew Hill, managing director of Pitch Invasion, said the accreditation had been an extremely worthwhile undertaking.

"We as a company are obviously honoured to be the first organisation in England to achieve the award and it has been a real privilege to meet with Sir Trevor at Wembley to celebrate this fact," he said.

"We've always prided ourselves on being professional and focusing on high quality delivery within our leagues, but the FA's accreditation has helped us to take a far closer look at what we do as a company and examine areas that we can continue to improve."

"Achieving this award is recognition of the high standards that we maintain in Pitch Invasion's leagues."

Pitch Invasion's Cheslyn Hay league, at the Saredon Road school, runs on Monday and Thursday nights.

For more information visit [www.pitch-invasion.com](http://www.pitch-invasion.com) or call 0844 745 2020.



Sir Trevor Brooking presents the FA award to Andrew Hill of Pitch Invasion

# Wedding snap inspires Rhia to Miss Slinky title

WHEN nurse Rhia Mason saw a picture of herself at her brother's wedding, she decided it was time to lose weight. The photograph was the wake-up call that Rhia needed.

Since January the mother-of-one has lost five stone.

Rhia, who lives in St Matthew's Road, Burntwood, joined a slimming class in Hammerwich with her friend Chris Cooper and both of them have worked hard to lose weight.

Rhia, who works at Samuel Johnson Hospital in Lichfield, said she had piled on the pounds after her daughter Isla was born.

At her heaviest, she reached 16-and-a-half stone. To shed the weight, she swapped her daily diet of chocolate, crisps, cake and chips for fruit, pasta and yoghurt, and also took up dancing.

And she was delighted at her last weigh-in to step on the scales and find she had reached her target weight of 11st 5lb.

## Comfort

Now her Slimming World class have named her their 2012 Miss Slinky.

"At the time I was in a job where I was stressed at work and I had put on weight after having Isla, and so I started to comfort eat," says Rhia, 30.

"My brother Richard had his wedding at the Village

by Cathy Spencer

Hotel in Walsall and when I saw a photo of myself I realised how big I had become. Now that I've lost the weight, I have noticed my joints feel better and my asthma has also improved."

Rhia, who is 5ft 4.5in, has dropped from a size 22 to a 12 and says her husband Steve loves her new look. "Steve never put me down over my weight but he praises me all the time about how well I've done."

"I used to go into clothes shops and thought that people were looking at me and saying 'she doesn't belong in here'. Now I love going shopping."

After winning the title in her group, Rhia is waiting to hear if she has won the national title, and the £2,000 shopping prize.

Slimming World's annual Miss Slinky competition recognises members who have undergone a huge transformation by becoming slimmer and more confident.

Rhia's consultant at Slimming World, Suzi Rigby, said: "I hope she inspires lots of other people to improve their health by losing weight."



Rhia Mason, who has lost more than five stone and been crowned Miss Slinky by her slimming group



The picture that made her lose the weight - second left, Rhia, with pals at the wedding



Rhia earlier this year with husband Steve and Isla after she had lost three stone

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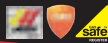
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## Concerns raised on proposal

A PROPOSED housing development in Cheslyn Hay looks unlikely to go ahead in its current form after a government report highlighted several concerns.

The plans, by developer Morris Homes, include building 32 houses on open land off New Horse Road. In June South Staffs Council refused the plans amid concerns the development would have a detrimental impact for residents in nearby Park Street.

Residents said the development would overlook their homes and block sunlight.

Government inspector Brendan Lyons has echoed those concerns and supported the council's decision, claiming the positive aspects of the plans "would not outweigh the harm to neighbours' living conditions".

He added the proposed layout was inherently flawed.

Councillor Brian Cox, chairman of South Staffordshire Council's regulatory committee, said: "I don't think anyone is disputing that we need more affordable homes and this development offered that. The problem here lies with the fact that the impact on the existing nearby homes would be too great."

## Gipsy site bid refused

PLANS to expand a gipsy site on green belt land in Hatherton have been rejected.

Site owner Ethal Lee had appealed against South Staffs Council's decision to turn down plans to increase the number of caravans at High House Lane from four to 14.

But government planning inspector Mark Dakeyne supported the council's original decision.

He claimed the harm to the green belt and concerns about highway safety outweighed the need for the extension to the site.

## Get skates on for ice sessions

CANNOCK residents can get their skates on when free ice skating sessions are offered next week.

Silver Blades Ice Rink, based at Lakeside Plaza, is the venue for the sessions on January 7 and 8.

Call 08700 852929 for more information.

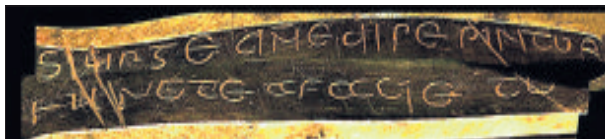
# Rare Biblical text on strip of Hoard gold

A RARE inscription on a strip of gold, found as part of the Staffordshire Hoard, contains a Biblical quotation from the Old Testament, it has emerged.

The discovery has excited scholars of the period as it suggests that the quotation may demonstrate that Christianity, at the time, was less dominated by the Bible than by the rituals and services.

The Staffordshire hoard of Anglo-Saxon treasure was discovered in a field in Hammerwich in July 2009.

The hoard of more than 3,000 objects, from jewelled sword hilts to crosses, buckles and helmet fragments also contained several



A strip of gold from the Staffordshire Hoard inscribed with a Biblical quotation

garnet-inlaid gold strips including one with an inscription. Although there are many religious inscriptions on the 250 Anglo-Saxon inscribed objects which have been

previously discovered, just 21 are accurate biblical quotations. Just two, before the Staffordshire strip, were from the Old Testament. The new research, published by the

University of St Andrews, suggests that the preference for quotations from the New Testament, and from liturgical sources, may tell us something about church organisation and influence at the time.

Professor Elisabeth Okasha, now Professor Emerita and Acting Director of the Language Centre at University College Cork, said: "The paucity of Biblical quotation in the inscriptions seems particularly surprising in view of the involvement of the Anglo-Saxon church in literacy and learning, especially in Latin learning, and in the translation of at least some parts of the Bible from Latin into Old English."

# Amazon staff shocked as hundreds lose their jobs

**SHOCKED staff have hit out at bosses of online retailer Amazon after hundreds of workers at the Rugeley distribution centre lost their jobs after the Christmas rush.**

by Marion Brennan

The company says it had taken on hundreds of additional workers during the high demand period but the jobs were meant to be temporary.

Some who lost their jobs believed they had secure contracts.

Amazon opened its huge new centre at Towers Business Park, Rugeley, in September, announcing 900 jobs.

The move to the town was widely welcomed as a much-needed jobs boost.

But the company now says that the 900 workers would be employed only at peak times.

One employee, a single mother-of-one from Rugeley who did not want to be named, said: "People are devastated. It's awful not knowing whether you'll still have a job tomorrow."

### Temporary

A friend, aged 43, who also works at the centre, said: "They arrived promising hundreds of jobs for the people of Rugeley but there seems to be very little on offer at the end of the day."

Sam Smith, 21, of Maycroft Close, Hednesford, said: "I was taken on as a

temporary but I wasn't expecting to go so soon."

Company spokesman Ben Howes said: "We've had a great first Christmas at Rugeley as a result of the strong workforce we have recruited."

"The workforce has played an integral part in fulfilling the millions of orders that we have received over the Christmas period."

"Christmas is our busiest time of the year and we worked with a local agency who provide a temporary staffing service to ensure that we had hundreds of additional people working at our centre during this period of high demand."

"These additional associates were specifically taken on for the Christmas period and as that period is coming to an end, so is the requirement for the agency to provide us with as high a number of people."

"We look forward to a busy 2012 at our Rugeley centre and are on track to have around 900 permanent and temporary employees working at the site during our peak months in 2012."

## Plea over Rotary group

ROTARIANS in Rugeley are appealing for help to establish a group in Hednesford. It follows a special request by Rotary International for groups to set up satellite branches.

Anita Farrant from the Rugeley Rotary Club said: "Rotary International are trying to find new initiatives for plotting new ways of starting clubs."

Rugeley Rotary will have details of Hednesford branch on its website [www.rotary-ribi.org](http://www.rotary-ribi.org). For more information call Anita on 07930 031148.



Photographer Jacqui Ashmore and Andy Watson. Back: models David Miller, James Ashmore, Gavin Jones, Christopher Marklew, Lee James and Michael Ballinger

## Calendar the tonic for soldier

A GROUP of pub regulars have made a calendar for Help for Heroes after deciding to cheer up one of their friends in Afghanistan.

Drinkers and staff at The Junction Inn, in Chasetown, decided to send a Christmas present to Lance Corporal Greg Derry who is serving with the forces in Afghanistan.

Greg, aged 30, and from Chasetown, is a regular at the pub and friend Jacqui Ashmore, aged 29 thought a tongue-in-cheek calendar would be the perfect gift.

However, regulars began to ask for copies and Jacqui was overwhelmed by demand.

She contacted Help for Heroes, who agreed to lend support. Some 150 were printed and are selling well.

Jacqui said: "We've already sold 100 and made about £400."

"We decided to do it when we found out he wasn't going to be home for Christmas, so we thought a calendar would cheer him up. People were so impressed they asked for more."

"I need to thank: Christopher Marklew, Gavin Jones, Robert Benton, Michael Ballinger, Lee James, Adam Lyn, Andy Watson, John Evans, James Ashmore, David Miller, and Lee Ingram."

To get a calendar, call Jacqui on 07827 667152.

## New year walk at Chasewater

A NEW Year walk around the Chasewater reservoir takes place on Monday, January 2.

Lichfield District Council's Chasewater rangers are organising the free guided, three-mile walk at the country park. It starts from Chasewater Innovation Centre at 2pm.

The walk is designed for all ages and abilities, and dogs are welcome on a lead. People are advised to wear warm clothes and sturdy footwear.

Email [chasewater@lichfieldcc.gov.uk](mailto:chasewater@lichfieldcc.gov.uk) or call 01543 370607 for details.

## Winging in for a network meeting

NETWORKING group Cannock Wings will hold its latest meeting on January 20.

Aimed at businesswomen in the town, the meeting costs £15 for visitors to attend and includes presentations, guest speakers and networking.

It takes place at the Ramada Hotel, on Watling Street, at 9.30am.

Call 07985 924152 for details.

## Proud dad sees dancers triumph

A PROUD Heath Hayes father saw his two children bring home a trophy from a top dance championships.

Chloe Neville, with partner Shola Allen, won the under-16 rock and roll section of the European Dance Championships in Prestatyn.

Chloe's brother Kyle won the under-10 Street Dance category. Dad Warren said: "It was a stressful weekend but a fantastic result."

## Ex-stock to go on sale at library

BOOK lovers can bag a bargain at an ex-stock sale at Cannock Library.

The sale runs from January 16 to 21 during normal library opening hours.

Among the selection on offer at the Manor Avenue venue will be a wide range of adult and children's books, CDs and DVDs from libraries across Staffordshire.

## Bridal fair date

BRIDES and grooms-to-be are invited to a Wedding fair in Cannock next week. The Roman Way Hotel, on Watling Street, is hosting the fair on Thursday January 8. Admission is free.

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## thechronicle

# THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



I TAKE my hat off to the reader who has collected no fewer than 53 peculiar phrases used by weather forecasters over the past couple of years. We all need our hobbies. First out of the collection:

- \* "Mildly offensive showers."
- \* "A seedbed for more snow."
- \* "Nuggets of brightness."

oooooooooooo

THE big thing in 2012 will be televisions, music systems and other electronic gizmos which are operated by voice or hand signal, without the need for remote controls.

As Auntie Beeb puts it: "Controlling the TV without a remote would eliminate the need to look for it." Quite so. But have you noticed how the further technology advances, and the less we have to remember anything, the worse our memories get?

oooooooooooo

JOHN Masefield's Sea-Fever must be one of the most parodied of all poems. This version, fit for any cold, wet winter's day, comes from a reader:

"I must down to the café again  
For a cup of tea and a bun  
And all I ask  
Is the toast is hot  
And the butter's on the run."

oooooooooooo

AND lo, the seasons turn. The turkey vanishes, the sprouts repeat and Christmastide gives way to Thompsonside, the festival of booking summer holidays. Over the Xmas break I happened upon a DVD I was given this time last year, a compilation of my father's family cine films from 1961 to 1967. I had never watched it before.

Great God, we had some awful hols. In flickering 8mm, three small Rhodes boys, wrapped in anoraks against the chill of an English heat-wave, clamber morosely over the rocks at Woolacombe, pausing occasionally to whack each other with long, leathery fronds of seaweed. When people tell you they made their own entertainment in the old days, this is what they mean.

The high point of that holiday was watching Hawker Hunters flying over to bomb the Torrey Canyon (ask your grandfather).

Ten years after Woolacombe, we discovered a place called Menorca and never looked back.

oooooooooooo

BRITAIN'S oldest spiritualist newspaper, the Psychic News, is back in business following its closure in July 2010. All together, now: We didn't see that coming.

oooooooooooo

MEANWHILE, the communal gathering places in the southern China village of Wukan are filled with protesters raging against Communist party corruption and land seizures.

It is a reminder of the rarely-seen but bitter divisions in China between rich and poor, party and people, city and country.

While any number of observers tell us that China will be the world superpower of the 21st century, the really smart observers always add the words, "if it can hold together."

**Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star**

# Residents prepared for appeal battle

RESIDENTS have told of their joy after plans for 150 homes, a supermarket and hotel in Penkridge were vetoed by councillors.

But they warned they were prepared to fight if the applicant decides to appeal.

South Staffordshire Council threw out the scheme, for the Lyne Hill Industrial Estate, off Wolverhampton Road.

Sandra Chambers, one of the campaigners, said: "The result was beyond our wildest dreams. We're thrilled that good sense prevailed."

The parish council and the specially formed Penkridge Action Group, together with a large number of individual residents, fought the proposal.

Mrs Chambers, of Teddesley Road, suggested the supermarket

would have "ripped the heart and soul out of the community".

She said: "Penkridge is an historic centre with a vibrant community and many independent shops. It's why a lot of people came to live here in the first place.

"Any high street should be at the heart of its community, and this development, just out of town, would have destroyed that."

She said villagers were anxious when they heard that the decision would be made so close to Christmas.

"But we were delighted with the number of people who turned out to support us," she said. "There was jubilation when the decision was announced."

She warned the village would fight again if an appeal was lodged.

# Village development scheme is turfed out

PLANS for a nursing home, petrol station and shops in Penkridge have been thrown out. A parish councillor claimed the plans would have "destroyed" the village.

by Charlotte Cross

Villagers were celebrating after a scheme, for the Lyne Hill Industrial Estate, off Wolverhampton Road, was refused by South Staffs Regulatory Committee.

The applicants Northcreek Estates had lodged a bid to transform the area into a new 150-home development, including a 60-bed nursing home, three-storey hotel, supermarket and a six-pump petrol station.

There were cheers and applause from the public gallery when councillors voted against recommendations from planning officers to approve the project.

A total of 551 people lodged objections to the plans.

## Genuine

Parish councillor Calvert Stonehouse said the project would "destroy" the village and take shoppers away from the centre.

"The impact on the village centre will result in loss of trade and closure of the existing shops, with the loss of jobs, and a decrease in footfall," he said.

Councillor Leonard Bates said he believed the proposals could "seriously jeopardise" the vitality of the village. It could result in the permanent loss of businesses, as well as genuine employment land.

"The floor space would be excessive and out of keeping with Penkridge," he added.

Main objections surrounded the closure of an employment site, a negative impact on existing traders, a loss of trees and traffic safety fears, along with its distances from the main centre of Penkridge.

Agent John Williams, on behalf of Northcreek Estates, said Penkridge was under-performing as a shopping centre and the shops would help claw back the estimated £32m that villagers spend in other towns.

"A new food store would provide competition and choice."

Northcreek held an exhibition in January where residents were given an early indication of the plans for the brownfield site.

The council also received two comments of support which said having more retailers to choose from was a good thing and that a new nursing home was needed.

# Engineering firm buyout

A BURNWOOD engineering group has bought a Walsall company that makes sophisticated electronic check weighing systems.

Unitech Industries specialises in bespoke stainless steel food processing equipment and took over Driver Southall Ltd.

The Unitech Group has a workforce of more than 100 at its Burnwood factory in Prospect Road and employs 250 people across the UK. Driver Southall employs nine.

The Driver Southall operation is currently relocating to Burnwood and will be fully operational there from the new year.

# Surprise party for retirement



Lunchtime supervisor, Margaret Nutting, aged 65, who is retiring, with Patience Lowe, four, and Demi Brown, five, at Redhill Primary School in Cannock

A WOMAN who has given more than 30 years' service to a school in Cannock has celebrated her retirement with pupils and staff in a surprise party.

Margaret Nutting, aged 65, left Redhill Primary School - but admitted it was not for the final time.

Mrs Nutting has been at the Wright's Avenue school, in West Chadsmoor since

1981 as a cleaner and lunchtime supervisor and intends to come back as a volunteer.

Office manager Julie Windsor said: "She will be dearly missed as a member of staff but the children are looking forward to her coming back as a volunteer helper."

She celebrated her retirement with a surprise party with the nursery and reception children.

# Evening classes set up by hospice

ST GILES Hospice is inviting people to sign up for a course which teaches how to help others cope with bereavement.

The Whittington-based hospice is encouraging would-be volunteers to sign up for the 10-week working with loss course starting next month.

It is also open to anyone wishing to know more about how to support those who have experienced the loss of a loved one.

Time is running out to register for the course and places are limited.

The first sessions take place on January 13 and 14.

People will then attend a series of Tuesday evening classes and two more daytime sessions.

All classes take place at St Giles Hospice's Education Centre in Whittington. The course costs £150 or £300 with university accreditation.

St Giles Hospice has hospices based in Gosport Lane, Walsall, Fisherwick Road, Lichfield, and Lindridge Road, Sutton Coldfield.

To sign up for the working with loss module, call the hospice education team on 01543 434533.

# Support by footballers

HEDNESFORD Town footballers were lending their support to a campaign to tackle alcohol-related violence.

Players warmed up for the crunch Boxing Day clash at home to neighbours Chasetown wearing T-shirts carrying the campaign's 'It's Never OK' slogan.

The players were asked to spread the message by the Cannock Chase Community Safety Partnership.

For information and advice visit the campaign's homepage at: [www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/itsneverok](http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/itsneverok)

# New year stroll

THE Chase & District Group Ramblers start the new year with an easy eight-mile walk at Broomhills & Pelsall Wood. Meet at Hednesford rail station car park, Anglesey Street for a prompt 9am departure on January 2. For more, call walk leader Audrey on 01543 672958.

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NEWS  
in briefWork to start on  
scientific sites

CONSERVATION work is to get under way at sites of special scientific interest in the new year.

Lichfield District Council's countryside team will begin its winter heathland works in early January.

Taking place for a number of weeks at Chasewater Heath and Gentshaw Common, the works will include cutting back scrub and removing tree shoots.

The works, funded by Natural England through the High Level Stewardship scheme, are a statutory requirement.

Launch party for  
release of single

A STAFFORDSHIRE band launch their first single tomorrow night (Friday).

The Low Orders will at Lichfield Guildhall in Bore Street, supported by four piece outfit Fazer.

For people buying the single on the night, there will be three bonus tracks on the CD.

A limited release of 200 four track CDs is being made.

For launch party tickets, call Lichfield Arts Box Office on 01543 262223 or visit [www.lichfieldarts.org.uk](http://www.lichfieldarts.org.uk)

Little learners in  
first Nativity play

LITTLE Learners from South Staffordshire's Cannock campus nursery took part in their first ever Nativity play.

All the registered children took part and the college hopes it will become an annual attraction.

Manager Kelly O'Grady said: "We are very proud of all the children. This was a real achievement because the nursery was only completed in September."

Psychic fair to  
aid cat charity

CAT lovers in Lichfield are invited to a psychic fair to help raise much needed funds for a local charity.

The Lichfield and Tamworth branch of the Cats Protection will host the holistic event on Saturday January 21, from 10am until 4pm at St Mary's Centre, Market Square.

There will be a range of stalls and admission is free.

## Date of meeting

CANNOCK'S Care and Share Group meets at 1pm on Tuesday, January 3 at a new venue - the Community Fire Station, in Hedgesford Road. Call 01543 500404 for more.

Love rival  
attacked  
at home

A RUGELEY man who battered a love rival and smashed up his flat has been given a suspended jail sentence.

Delivery driver Martin Ridley attacked Philip Smith in his own home and gave him a collapsed lung after punching him, Stafford crown court heard.

Ridley had discovered that his partner had begun a relationship with Mr Smith.

Pat Sullivan, prosecuting, said: "Mr Smith was aware she was in a relationship with the defendant but that it was coming to an end."

Mr Smith was at home in his flat in Rugeley when Ridley knocked on the door, inviting him to go outside.

He suspected it was going to be a fight and went to put his shoes on but Ridley followed and attacked him.

"He then proceeded to smash up the flat while Mr Smith was doubled up on the sofa, bleeding."

Ridley, aged 41, of Tunnicliffe Drive, Rugeley who admitted charges of criminal damage and wounding, was given a year suspended for two years. He was ordered to do 180 hours work and pay £500 compensation.

Stephen Bailey, defending, said Ridley was an otherwise respectable man.

Gifts plea  
by hospice

ST GILES Hospice is asking for donations of unwanted Christmas gifts.

The hospice is appealing for any unwanted presents to be donated to its network of charity shops, including one in Wolverhampton Road, Cannock.

Lynwen Truesdale, head of retail, said: "Each Christmas people receive presents they don't really need, want or may already have."

"They may not have a receipt and the unwanted present invariably ends up as a new addition to the household clutter."

## Drivers tested

HUNDREDS of drivers were pulled over as part of a Christmas crackdown on drink-driving in Cannock.

Police stopped 401 vehicles on Church Street, and the A5 at Longford on Thursday morning, December 22.

No driver failed a breath test. One was fined £500 for using illegal red diesel.



Chase MP Aidan Burley

## Stag party row MP stays defiant

CANNOCK Chase MP Aidan Burley has said he did not break any law by attending a Nazi-themed stag party.

Mr Burley was last week facing fresh calls to stand down after it emerged a criminal investigation has been launched.

French authorities confirmed they were probing the conduct of the Cannock Chase MP and 12 of his friends.

The group was filmed partying at a resort in the Alps.

There is also speculation that the

Tory MP could be interviewed by police.

Magistrates have received a complaint that the revellers were inciting racial hatred and glorifying crimes against humanity.

Mr Burley responded by saying: "They are launching a preliminary investigation, and I understand I am not the focus of it."

"I do not believe I have broken any French law and have distanced myself from other people on the stag."

However, Dudley North MP Ian

Austin, shadow work and pensions minister, repeated his call for Prime Minister David Cameron to expel Mr Burley from the Conservative Party. "The scandal surrounding Aidan Burley's disgraceful conduct is not going away," he said.

## Racism

Julien Andrez, counsel for La Fondue restaurant where the stag night started, has said bosses filed a criminal complaint over the stag do.

Hamdy Boussouiba, director of

French pressure group SOS Racism, is also thought to have lodged a complaint.

The gathering has already cost Mr Burley his job as a Parliamentary Private Secretary to Transport Secretary Justine Greening.

Mr Cameron has ordered his own inquiry.

Under the French penal code, it is a crime unless required for a film, a play or a historical exhibition, to exhibit in public a uniform, insignia or emblem reminiscent of those which were worn by the Nazis.

Park revamp a step closer  
as lotto funding secured

A £3.7million revamp of Hedgesford Park is a step closer after Cannock Chase Council secured initial lottery backing of £71,600 to draw up detailed plans for the site.

by Mark Mudie

A redesigned pavilion will form the focal point of the project while new play facilities and restoration works to railings, gates and pillars around the perimeter will also be carried out.

Paths would be improved to make half the park accessible, tennis courts would be refurbished and new trees planted.

Improved drainage for the park's football pitches is needed as well as new signs. The district council revealed residents' memories of the park from down the decades would heavily influence the development.

The authority will use some of the five-figure sum, granted by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund, to stage consultation events where the park's past will be pieced together.

## Investment

Detailed plans will then be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund, with council bosses hoping to secure £2m towards the total investment.

Culture chief Councillor Christine Mitchell said: "We're delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund have

given us this support. Hedgesford Park has been at the heart of the town for more than a century and it's great to know we're a step closer to making sure it remains so for the next 100 years."

"Getting through the first stage is no guarantee that we'll be successful but we'll now be working really hard to submit a fantastic bid for the £2m of funding."

Heritage Lottery Fund regional head Anne Jenkins added: "Hedgesford Park is valuable green space for local residents and is an important part of Hedgesford's natural heritage."

"We are pleased to be giving our initial support for this redevelopment project and are looking forward to seeing the plans progress."

A Friends of Hedgesford Park group has been set up to support the refurbishment plans.

Hedgesford Park was formed on land once known as Hedgesford Pool, a body of water that covered 27 acres of land. It opened in 1931 and boasted two bowling greens, eight tennis courts, putting greens, a cricket pitch and a pavilion.

## Mural hopes to draw in the shoppers



South Staffordshire College students with the mural they have created

STUDENTS have unveiled a mural which they hope will capture the imaginations of young and old at a shopping centre in Staffordshire.

Youngsters at South Staffordshire College have painted the design at Cannock Shopping Centre after bosses agreed to let them loose on some wall space.

The group of around 30 students have depicted a 'seek and find' game to

draw children to the image, while basing the mural on familiar Midland themes linked to the region's rich industrial heritage.

Hints to yesteryear include a sign advertising Saturday matinee performances for sixpence.

The college's Georgina D'Onofrio paid tribute to shopping centre manager Natal Chapman for giving them the go-ahead for the project. She said:

"She's supported us and given the students the space to paint."

"Part of our criteria for their certificates this year was to work in the community and volunteer their services to clean up an area of their local town."

A number of 14 to 16 year-olds were involved in the project as part of the college's alternative educational provision for teenagers who have experienced problems at school.

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### thechronicle

## Awards for giving blood for the cause



Nicholas Bullock and Ian Plumb celebrate their awards for giving blood

TWO dedicated blood donors from Cannock have been recognised for their commitment to rolling up their sleeves.

Ian Plumb and Nicholas Bullock were among more than 25 donors to be honoured at an awards ceremony held by NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) at the Fairlawns Hotel and Spa, Aldridge. They were each presented with crystal plates for giving blood 75 times.

Mr Plumb, a 50-year-old lorry driver, has been donating for more than 20 years and said: "My father had cancer 15 years ago and was helped by blood donations."

Mr Bullock, a driver aged 55, has been giving blood for 38 years.

He said: "Knowing that donations have and will help so many people has kept me giving."

## Footballers' gear taken

A BURGLAR stole phones, cash and clothes from a leisure centre's changing rooms after pretending to be a member of a football team.

He was snared by police minutes later after a player traced his iPhone using a tracking signal.

The raider struck at Monckton Recreation Centre, in Pinfold Lane, Penkridge, during a Penkridge Town men's match. The game was abandoned at half-time when players discovered the break-in.

Four people from Wolverhampton

were arrested and a 30-year-old man was released on bail pending further inquiries. Two other men, aged 18 and 33, and an 18-year-old woman were freed without charge.

### Wallets

Police spokesman Faye Casey said car keys, mobile phones, clothes, wallets, bank cards and cash had been taken.

The centre manager said players had helped police to close in on a suspect.

He said: "All the lads went in at half-time for their team talk and realised

their stuff had been stolen. One of them had a location tracker on his phone and managed to pinpoint where it was and let the police know."

He added it was the first raid in four years at the building.

"We have got CCTV, we keep the changing rooms locked during the games, and teams are given keys to get in when there are substitutions and at half-time," he said.

"This guy has pretended to be one of the players and then kicked the door in after it was locked up."

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thechronicle

# Car park at club could make way for housing

## Band makes big noise



Sound Check Rugeley band members Joe Wheeldon, Kiyle Hughes, Susan Rogers and Alex Powell-James

A YOUNG Rugeley group raised the roof of Stoke-on-Trent's live music venue The Sugarmill.

Band members from rock-pop group Sound Check Rugeley, aged from 11 to 18, performed live with

eight other recently formed bands from across the county at the Power Tour gig.

Band member Joe Wheeldon, aged 17, said: "I've always been interested in music."

LAND used as a car park by members of a working men's club in Norton Canes will be replaced by housing, under controversial new plans.

The plans have led to complaints by householders, who claim it will be over-development.

Six houses would be built on the site, which is used as a car park by members of Lido Working Men's Club in Norton East Road.

Shenstone-based firm Quality Properties Ltd is behind the proposals to transform the land, which measures 13,562sq ft.

The plans also include creating a new entrance of the neighbouring School Road.

The plans sent by agents J Harris Design Partnership show the new development would comprise four three-bedroom semi-detached properties, one three-bedroom detached house and one four-bedroom detached house.

But residents living nearby have voiced concerns about the proposed scheme.

Peter Ashton, who lives in School Road, said: "This is a gross over-development of this plot."

### Inadequate

"It seems none of the houses have garages, merely allocated car parking spaces with an average of two parking spaces per house. This will be totally inadequate for today's family needs."

"Also, visitors will no doubt park on Norton East Road."

"This is a very busy road at the best of times as well as being a regular bus run."

Another School Road resident wrote to Cannock Chase District council planning officers with an objection to the scheme on traffic safety and parking grounds.

The club opened in 1889 and has about 400 members with an over-60s club, cribbage and darts teams.

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## Top Hat and Tinsel was treat

I WAS one of the few people at St Joseph's church hall in Rugeley to enjoy a show called Top Hat and Tinsel. It was a great show and a lot better than most of the utter drivel which passes for entertainment on TV.

The five performers were extremely versatile and the old time music hall format included The Man Who Broke The Bank At Monte Carlo, the One Eyed Yellow God to the North of Katmandu. There was the tragic tale of a poor boy, Albert, who went to the zoo at Blackpool and was eaten by a lion.

I've not seen such a deafening performance of the Sand Dance for many a year. There were lots of songs and carols and the programmes contained song words so we could all join in. The second half was just as good but so different – a Victorian farce.

To all those people who missed this little gem: catch it next time!  
SUE DAY  
The Beeches  
Rugeley

## Questions over leisure handover

AFTER reading about our leisure venues being handed over to WLCT in the Chronicle of November 24, I wanted to ask some questions about the cost to the taxpayer.

The first question I asked was that if £2m was going to be invested in leisure facilities when this charity takes over in February, who is going to pay this being that this is a not-for-profit organisation and charitable trust?

They insisted that the trust was paying it, but to my mind, the only way the trust could pay this is by raising the price of entry to cover the £2m.

My second question was who sets the cost of entry into these venues? The answer was that the trust does, however there are agreements that for any group, school, club etc using the facilities now the price could only be raised by the CPI rate. The unemployed would only pay half the normal price which could be raised by the CPI rate. This would have to be raised every year to make up the £2m.

I asked if the trust was paying any money to the council to run the facilities and got no direct answer and I also

questioned who was paying for the upkeep of the facilities. It came out that the taxpayer would subsidise the leisure venues to the sum of just over £1bn.

However the council thinks it is saving £800,000 but had no answer when I pointed out that that was most probably the cost of the wages and pensions of all the staff who they will not have to pay from February.

I also asked what consultation was done with the taxpayer and was told selected members of the public had been consulted. Surely with the use of so much taxpayers' money there should have been a lot more input by all the taxpayers and not a select few?

I think the council should remember that they are answerable to the public. It makes me wonder why we are bringing in this trust when all we will be saving is the money for the workers' jobs. How long will it be before they are saying that they are having to make cutbacks?

R PEATY  
Cannock

## Christmas event was a success

I would like to congratulate the great Christmas celebration on December 2, organised by Rugeley Traders.

Although bitterly cold, the traders on the 40 or so outside stalls were frozen but full of Christmas bonhomie and appeared to be doing a roaring trade. The event had carol singers from the local churches, a Victorian choir, a jazz quartet, a smashing display of festive lights and to top it all a great fireworks display.

Rugeley traders have been getting their act together in a professional manner in the last couple of years, with the advent of the Rugeley lottery, the proceeds of which they have used to great effect in the Christmas event.

Steve Dunning  
Brereton Road  
Rugeley

## Party antics blown out of proportion

WHAT a pity Aidan Burley has been forced to resign as a PPS over such a stupid thing.

Who hasn't been to a fancy dress party where someone has dressed up as a

German? Get a grip and stop blowing things out of all proportion.

ANN ROUND  
Hednesford

## LETTERS

## LETTERS

to the Editor

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

## E-MAIL

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## Thanks for Party was donations first class

PRESIDENT Dennis Robbins would like to thank those who donated to the Rotary Tree of Light and Santa sleigh appeals.

The money will be spent on community projects and Macmillan nurses. Special thanks to our sponsors Burntwood Town Council, Crown Cutting Services and all major supermarkets, Alexander James and Jayman for their support.

VINCE KANE  
Rotary Club Burntwood & District

MY WIFE and myself were fortunate to be invited to the Rugeley Market Traders Christmas party held at St Joseph's Club, Rugeley.

We would like to say a huge thank you to the lovely people who organised the evening, everything was first class and our hosts could not have been nicer and more generous.

Again thank you and I hope you all have a very prosperous 2012.

H LYONS  
Rugeley

## Appalled at teenagers' language

HAVING read your article regarding Penkridge Victorian Market and the comments made by its organiser Anne Geoghegan about it being buzzing with a great atmosphere, I just wondered if it was the same event I visited with my three young grandchildren?

We attempted to visit the market site around 7pm but couldn't get close to the stalls for the sheer volume of people. We hung around Santa's sleigh for about 40 minutes hoping to spot Father Christmas – also no joy.

A quick battle with the teenagers

around the funfair left us appalled at the great number of foul-mouthed teenagers just standing around with cans of lager and cider in their hands – some so intoxicated they were falling over.

We witnessed similar scenes last year but hoped this would be different this time. There was a police presence but this seemed to be limited to the stalls area and not the funfair area.

Having lived in Penkridge for more than 40 years I remember when a Penkridge Village evening consisted of

stalls and side shows along Market Street with no funfair as it is now.

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# Volunteers mark help centre's 25th birthday



Volunteers from the Landywood District Voluntary Help Centre commemorate 35 years of existence

**A VOLUNTARY group in Great Wyrley had a double celebration last week when it marked two big milestones.**

Landywood District Voluntary Help Centre formed in 1976 and members held a party to commemorate 35 years of helping the community.

Volunteers had another reason to celebrate in that the Rainbow Club, a part of the centre which provides activities for people with special needs, turned 25 years old.

Paulette Bentham initially established the help centre, located in Wal-

sall Road, for volunteers to come forward to help housebound people in Great Wyrley and Cheslyn Hay.

Current president Miriam Whitehouse said volunteers and users benefited hugely from its work.

## Wonderful

"It's a wonderful group," she said. "We've got people who've done 20 years and we've got youngsters who haven't been here long, but they're all wonderful. The users really appreciate what the centre does for them."

Three vehicles are run by the group, offering lifts for people in wheelchairs

or for those who need to go to hospital, while other services include proving meals for elderly families, a coffee stop, bingo and shopping trips.

Last year the help centre's work was honoured with two prestigious accolades; the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service and a South Staffordshire NHS award for the best Patients' Choice Quality and Excellence.

Miriam said: "It's nice to be acknowledged and the volunteers know they're appreciated."

Visit [www.landywoodvoluntary-help.co.uk](http://www.landywoodvoluntary-help.co.uk) or call 01922 418381 for more information.

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The changing face of Churchdale that was the home to the local office of the National Insurance

# When a Georgian house became insurance home

When the modern National Insurance scheme started in 1948 some odd quarters were chosen as local offices, out of necessity as they were stringent times.

One which was pleasingly memorable was the Rugeley office at Churchdale.

Churchdale was a delightful old Georgian house which had seen better times. It cried out for some gentle Tender Loving Care.

The main room downstairs was heated by an antiquated coke stove, he others by uneconomic coal fires in old cast-iron grates.

The toilets were antediluvian and the roof leaked.

Churchdale had belonged to the titled Littleton family, as witnessed by the cattle trough on nearby Wolsley Road. This had been presented by the Rev Hon C. J. Littleton of Church-



by Marion Kettle

dale, 1909). By 1960 it was owned by an MP, leased to the Ministry of Works, and the lease was running out.

Soon, its grounds would be part of a large housing enterprise. The demolish-and-burn philosophy of the 1960s was rushing in.

On a frantic day in 1961 - Lady Day - the very day the lease expired - we moved to an excellent new Vic Hallam building in Sandy Lane - a journey from quasi-rural to unremitting urban - and said farewell to the house, which had been our workplace.

We also said farewell to the fine stables and other out buildings, the unexplored timber summerhouse, which probably contributed to one of

the many bonfires, not just in Rugeley but all over England which then burned on building sites.

And farewell to the remaining grounds into which cattle from the adjoining farm would sometimes wander and peer curiously at us through the windows.

Today Churchdale would be protected as a listed building. Not so in 1961. But begone dull care!

This tale has a pleasing postscript.

Someone who has a house with a canal at the bottom of their garden, on part of the old Churchdale land, perhaps, has his holiday-hire narrowboat berthed on the Trent & Mersey there. She is called the Churchdale.

When not abroad, and but a short walk from the canal bridge on Station Road, she may be seen, tied up at home.

May God bless all who journey in her!



The ivy begins to creep up the walls for the Georgian house



The ivy-clad Churchdale that was demolished the the 1960s for make way for housing

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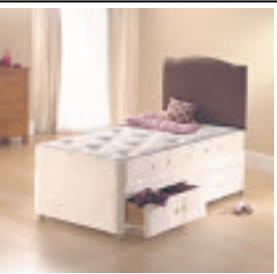


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## REVIEWS

thechronicle

# Portillo sets out for more trips through rail history

Great British Railway Journeys - Series 2

Once again the former politician, turned presenter, Michael Portillo picks up his 1840 Bradshaw's Guide and heads off around Britain using his book like a Victorian satnav.

In this round of five journeys Portillo heads to the far northern Scottish Isle of Skye, travels through the Midlands and Wales to the peninsula of Holyhead, traverses the flat lands of Norfolk, finds his way through the North East of England and finally ends up travelling the southern regions of the country from London through Kent to end his run in Hastings.

Portillo with his endearing and not entirely relaxed in front of the camera manner uses the guide and the remnant of the railways to explore the history, culture and evolution of Britain.

With the help, once again, of breathtaking scenery and fantastic aerial filming Portillo opens up Britain and its Victorian history like a pop up picture book.

There are myriad gems among this delightful series such as when he reads out the address to a haggis in arguably the worst Scottish ever broadcast on TV. His journeys take him to the birthplace of the Commando

regiment in a remote area of Scotland; to a chemical weapons factory in Rhydymwyn which was "the most secret location in the world" during the Second World War and then on to the almost spooky revelation of Thomas Telford building his profile into the Ironbridge in Shropshire. He turns his hand to trying to make hand raised pork pies in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire and creating specialist floor tiles for the houses of parliament.

Portillo shows just how much is accessible through the railways and what real treasures sometimes lie on our doorsteps should we only take the trouble to hop aboard and take a look. GBRJ II harkens back to the golden age of BBC documentaries along with the wonderfully quaint British Railway Films which if you are of a certain age will be remembered fondly.

Portillo's enthusiasm for rail travel always comes to the fore and throughout he repeatedly pays homage to the past on, which so much of modern society is built, without a hint of dullness or tedium.

This series along with the first should be a must for all railway enthusiasts and anyone who has any interest in Britain at all. **Great British Railway Journeys 2 is a five disc set and released January 9. Cert E.**



## Boyle's on guard in dark comedy

The Guard

"I can't figure out whether you are really smart or really dumb" is how the FBI agent sums up the enigma which is Sergeant Gerry Boyle of the Galway Garda, wonderfully played by Brendan Gleeson in this dark and sometimes cringeworthy gem of an Irish film.

Boyle is a policeman who follows his own code, which is highly questionable at the very least. He goes about his duties on the west coast of Ireland employing his grizzled and intolerant manner along with a subversive and offensive wit and a highly colourful way of speaking.

Boyle's life revolves around his dying mother and occasionally paying

for prostitutes but he is drawn into the world of major drug trafficking by the arrival of a black, FBI agent Wendall Everett, played by Don Cheadle.

With years of experience and an understanding of the local criminals Boyle has little interest in international drug gangs however, the more he tries to keep his distance the more he gets drawn into the dealings of the gang and the police corruption they are exploiting.

As the body count rises and he realises almost everyone around him is an agent Boyle decides it's time he took matters into his own hands and deal with the traffickers using his unorthodox methods, with the reluctant help of Everett. As they move High Noon-like

to the violent climax Boyle shows how justice is dealt out Galway style, leaving the viewer to puzzle over the fate of the anti-hero, although all the clues are there.

There are some truly dark comic moments one of which is Boyle passing on the drug dealers' arms to a member of the IRA and where Boyle's caustic manner reduces the seasoned runner of the paramilitary group to a blithering apologetic heap for asking him stupid questions.

**The Guard, Cert 15 is released Jan 16, cert 15. Special features include Behind the Scenes featurette, outtakes and deleted and extended scenes.**

Danny Farragher

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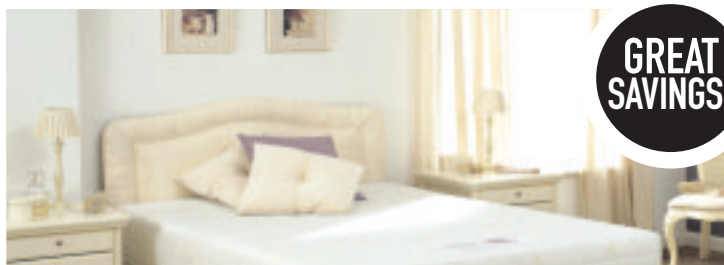


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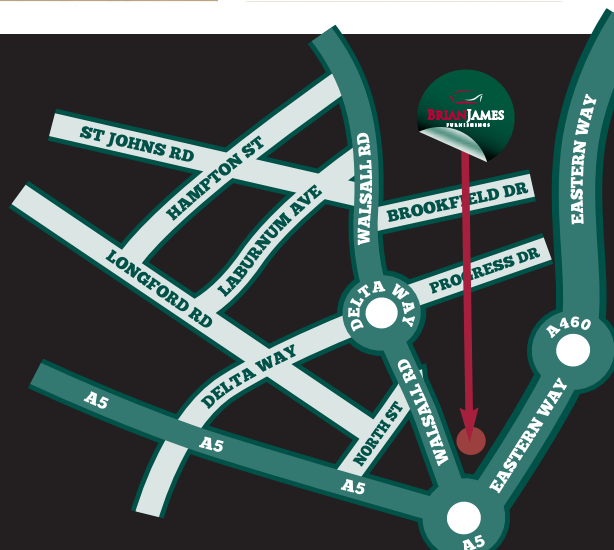
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### thechronicle

## No Humbug – Scrooge is best yet at Garrick

CHRISTMAS is a time for families, and for many, seeing a pantomime is part of their festive tradition.

For those performing or working on the shows, there's no better time of the year.

A Christmas Carol, which is due to end its 52-show run on January 2, has met with rave reviews, and has proved to be one of the most successful productions yet at the Lichfield Garrick.

Artistic director Adrian Jackson said: "This is the most lavish show we have produced yet, and we wanted to make it extra special with the ice skating and snow."

"I did have visions of it being like a Christmas card but also keeping it close to the story written by Charles Dickens."

### Studying

"We have had such a lot of compliments about the show, and schools who have come to see it have also been studying the text. They have said they are glad we kept the themes of the book."

Liz Porrett, technical manager and lighting designer, studied at Lichfield's King Edwards School. She said working over Christmas and New Year was all part-and-parcel of working in theatre. "It is a very enjoyable time for us and it is like a family here," she said. "We work six days a week and just have Christmas Day off and we really rack up the hours. But it is all worth it and once the shows are going, we can relax a little bit."

"Working from December through to January is almost a 'punishment' for having such a great job in theatre – but it is all worth it."

"Being sat at the back of the theatre we get to hear the immediate reaction from the audience at the end of the show, and it makes it all worthwhile."

"That's what our job is about, to entertain and make people happy."

The star name in this year's production was Graham Cole, who spent 25 years as Pc Tony Stamp in The Bill. Playing Ebenezer Scrooge, he and his wife Cherry left their



Graham Cole, who is starring as Scrooge in A Christmas Carol



The Lichfield Garrick artistic director Adrian Jackson

London home for the first time at Christmas, staying in Lichfield throughout the performance. He said: "I first came to Lichfield in the summer for the press launch and it is just such a lovely, picturesque place. But I haven't got to see as much of it as I would like as we almost live in the theatre."

"But it is a great time of the year and it's a great performance that I am very proud to be part of."

Actor Alex Wadham who took on the parts of Bob Cratchit, Fezziwig and Old Joe, came 'home' for the show as he was born and bred in the city.

The 24-year-old, who studied at Nether Stowe High but now lives in London, said: "To be able to perform at The Garrick this Christmas is a dream."



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Thursday 29th	10:00 to 5:00
Friday 30th	10:00 to 5:00
Saturday 31st	9:00 to 4:00

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## thechronicle

### Parachute jump off but cash is doubled

#### CANNOCK AND DISTRICT LADIES PROBUS CLUB

AFTER welcoming everyone to the December meeting, chairman Val Beale asked for a few moments' silence to remember Anne Brookes, a long-serving member, who passed away recently. Funeral details were given.

A delicious Christmas lunch was served, followed by mince pies. Members decided to give donations to charity in lieu of Christmas cards. These will be sent to the Air Ambulance and St Giles Hospice.

### Goodwill is shown

#### RUGELEY LIONS AND ROTARY CLUBS

RUGELEY Lions and Rotary, over 10 very cold and crisp evenings, slalomed their way through town and neighbouring villages with the annual Santa sleigh.

A merry time was had by one and all and Father Christmas was supported each night by a large number of elves carrying good cheer (and buckets) to collect money for local causes. Despite the weather, Santa received a warm reception and more money was collected than ever before.

Special thanks must go to Rudolph, Rotarian Gerry Walsh, who guided the sleigh smoothly around, Dasher, Lion Peter Fielding, Waymax van hire and Mike Bailey for stabling the sleigh.

Most importantly, sincere thanks to the people of Rugeley and outlying villages who again showed their goodwill and generosity.

Kay Matthews had been sponsored to do a third parachute jump but this had to be postponed due to a problem with her eyes.

he asked if the sponsors would be willing for the money donated to still go to the Alzheimer's group at St Luke's Church. This was agreed and she said she would double the amount.

Betty Ramsden gave news of members who were not able to attend due to ill health.

An invitation had been received from Cannock and District Men's Probus to attend their annual lunch at the Terrace Restaurant on February 28.

Treasurer Pauline Parlane reminded everyone that subscriptions would be due in January and that the annual celebration lunch would be held in March.

Future events include the panto in January, craft days and a special Valentine tea on February 15.

Barbara Matthews introduced members Paulines Gooch and Benton who entertained with songs by Gershwin, carols and amusing poems. A vote of thanks was given by Betty Howard-Evans.

## CLUB NEWS

### A serious lesson about trafficking



l to r: Soroptimists Carolyn Dyer and Ann Rotchell with student engagement assistant, South Staffordshire College Cheryl Whittingham

#### CANNOCK SOROPTIMISTS

CANNOCK Soroptimists, at the invitation of lecturers, spent a day at the Lichfield campus of South Staffordshire College giving presentations on trafficking to students.

Groups of students were asked to consider what constitutes trafficking and to understand that it is not only about women and girls being brought into different countries to be enslaved as part of the sex business. It is also about girls in the UK being groomed and becoming victims of trafficking.

Part of the presentation was the showing of a DVD called My Dangerous Loverboy, a film commissioned by SOCA - Serious Organised Crime Agency - for use by professionals with teenagers. For further information phone 07847 011173 or e-mail thepurpleteardrop@gmail.com

### Tree event was wonderful

#### CANNOCK FRIENDS OF ST GILES

THE group was delighted to be a part of the charity Christmas tree event at St Luke's Church, Cannock.

The tree was decorated with the St Giles' colours of green and white, using the St Giles Christmas angel

Many visitors put their charity tokens into the box for which the Friends' group and the hospice is very

grateful. The event itself was wonderful, with more than 30 groups participating.

The effort and time put in by so many people for the

benefit of others was evident and quite overwhelming.

The Friends group holds fundraising events, and gives short talks and presentations on the work of the hospice and the new Compass Centre.

For more information contact Janette Arrowsmith on 01543 503739 or email jdyercann@hotmail.com

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Great Wyrley, 7.00 pm  
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#### Penkridge

Haling Dene Centre,  
7.00 pm  
Ring Jan: 07939 001558

#### Heath Hayes

Heath Hayes Primary  
School  
Wimblebury Road 7.00 pm  
Ring Lisa: 01543 279260

#### Huntington

Huntington Comm. Centre  
Stafford Road, 7.00 pm  
Ring Anne: 01543 505791

#### Rugeley

Rugeley Rose Theatre  
Taylors Lane  
Rugeley, 7.00 pm  
Ring Karen: 07807 785600

#### TUESDAY

**Cannock**  
St Lukes Church Centre  
Church Street 10.00 am  
Ring Anne: 01543 505791

#### Heath Hayes

Heath Hayes Primary  
School  
Wimblebury Road, 7.00 pm  
Ring Lisa: 01543 279260

#### WEDNESDAY

**Great Wyrley**  
St Marks Church Hall  
Station Street  
Great Wyrley, 7.00 pm  
Ring Karen: 01543 509459

#### Bridgtown

Bethal Methodist Church,  
Union Street, 5.00pm  
& 7.00 pm  
Ring Simon: 01543 495240

#### THURSDAY

**Cannock**  
The Chase Room,  
Avon Leisure Centre,  
Avon Road,  
6.30 pm  
Ring Jan: 07939 001558

#### Cheslyn Hay

Village Hall, Pinfold Lane,  
Cheslyn Hay, 7.00 pm  
Ring Karen: 01543 509459

#### Rugeley

Thursday 7.00 pm  
St. Augustine's Church  
Station Road  
Ring Esther: 07527 175277

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Old and New, all the very best for the New Year!



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Cannock &  
Huntington



**Jan**  
Penkridge  
& Cannock



**Kierston**  
Great  
Wyrley



**Lisa**  
Heath  
Hayes



**Esther**  
Rugeley



**Rachel**  
Rugeley

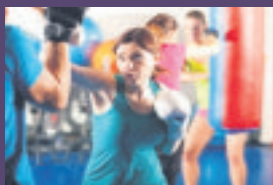


**Karen**  
Great Wyrley  
& Cheslyn  
Hay



**Simon**  
Bridgtown





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## M marques the spot for super saloon

THE NUMBER of people out there who have the means, or even the inclination, to spend in excess of £70,000 on a high-performance saloon has to be pretty limited.

It would therefore make sense then that the amount of interest in BMW's latest generation M5 would be equally limited, right?

Far from it. There are rival products to BMW's M-series cars, but the Munich masterpieces have an incredible knack of creating a loyal following of enthusiasts who revere the cars wearing the M Division tag.

This latest generation M5 also has something of a historical hurdle to negotiate. Breaking with tradition that goes all the way back to the first M5, the latest version does away with a naturally aspirated engine and instead uses a new twin-turbocharged V8.

For the M5 purists this came as something of a shock, but any fears of the 4.4-litre V8 being an anodyne, diesel-like powerplant can be dispelled.

For starters, BMW has managed to nestle the two turbochargers between the two banks of cylinders to give better throttle response.

Thanks to some impressive engineering, it provides the kind of aural accompaniment you would hope for from a non-turbo V8.

Yet the reason for the switch to turbocharging is to boost efficiency – hence the outgoing 5.0-litre V10, hugely characterful, but had to go in the bin.

### Spot

The M5 should be easy to spot. It manages to provide some visual muscle without being too obvious: the standard 19-inch wheels are good but the optional 20-inch versions will be an almost default choice.

The subtle bodykit toughens up the shape, while the wing vents and quad exhaust pipes are familiar M signifiers.

Slide behind the wheel, hit the starter button and there is a keen rasp from the exhaust, the big V8 already hinting that it is far from a sanitised compromise.

The M5 comes as standard with electronic adjustment of the damper settings, engine response and gearshift speed for the seven-speed dual-clutch gearbox.

Save for the instant acceleration should you squeeze the throttle a little too hard, the M5 is no more demanding than a regular 5.

Whether trundling through town or covering long distances on the motorway, the M5 is quiet, unobtrusive and rides very well indeed.

The gentler throttle response also helps you to eke out more miles from each litre of fuel. So comfortable is

### By Matt Joy

the M5 that you could easily forget what it can do: you could run your family around in it all year and they'd have no idea of what it was really capable of.

All that performance is only a throttle squeeze away, but to really get the full picture you need to switch the steering, dampers and engine into Sport Plus mode.

Even on a straight and flat piece of road you can feel the M5 tense up, riding more firmly, the steering offering greater resistance and the revs rising more instantly to throttle inputs.

Take control of the gearshifting yourself with the wheel-mounted paddles, then punch the accelerator and the response is instant and emphatic.

There's a sudden burst of controlled noise as the V8 begins to sing, and the combined efforts of the turbochargers delivers a mighty slug of torque.

Some 501lb.ft is on offer from just 1,500rpm, and with the gearbox delivering rapid shifts, the acceleration is truly remarkable.

Despite weighing a bag of cement less than two tons, the M5 is faster than the old one, and piles on the speed in an alarming easy fashion.

The brakes are suitably massive and shed even very high speeds with ease, although if you fancy taking your £80,000 super saloon out for a track day, the carbon ceramic brake option that will surely follow would be worth choosing.

You can switch the dynamic stability control into a track mode or off altogether, and like the best M cars, it will drift and slide like a hoiligan's dream or track precisely around a circuit with impressive tenacity.

But the joy is being able to have this much fun in a car that will still carry you and your family around in luxurious comfort, use less fuel than before and in all likelihood cost you less to run.

It's a sports saloon for every season, and as such has more than earned the right to wear the famous M badge



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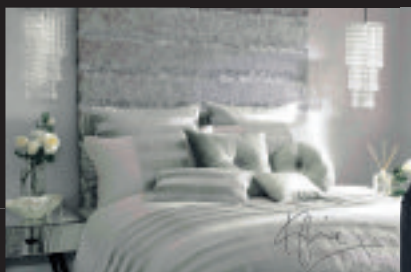
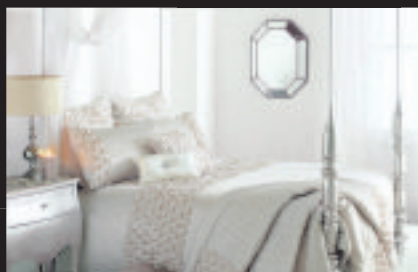
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## thechronicle

## Ron in box seat for a top award

A BURNTWOOD woman has been nominated by a long-time friend to be the Volunteer of the Year. Margaret Allen, of Highfield Avenue, has put Veronica Box on the shortlist for the county council award.

'Ron', as she is known, has spent years helping the community of Burntwood. As well as helping with meals on wheels, she has also organised coffee mornings for Macmillan Cancer Support for 10 years, raising more than £20,000 in the process.

She was secretary of Burntwood Memorial Hall and raised more than £60,000 for Hammerwich Cricket during a 40-year stint as member.

She is also an active committee member of Burntwood Women's Institute, and runs the weekly keep fit class.

Ron, also of Highfield Avenue, said: "I am really surprised and honoured to be nominated."

There are nine categories in all. Visit [www.volunteer-staffordshire.org.uk/awards](http://www.volunteer-staffordshire.org.uk/awards), call 0300 111 8000 or nominate via Facebook or Twitter. Those shortlisted will be invited to the gala dinner and awards ceremony at Alton Towers in March.

## Fundraisers are needed

CANCER Research UK is looking to form a dedicated group of fundraisers in Rugeley to generate at least £5,000 during 2012.

The group would be responsible for organising a least one event during the year to help reach the fundraising target.

Area volunteer manager for Rugeley, Miranda Williams, said: "We would love to establish a new fundraising group in Rugeley."

Email Miranda at [Miran.da.Williams@cancer.org.uk](mailto:Miran.da.Williams@cancer.org.uk) or call her on 07918035823.

# Battle of Arnhem veteran dies at 95



Arnhem veteran George Parry and his wife Joyce, pictured in 2008

**A VETERAN of the ill-fated Battle of Arnhem in 1944 has died at his Cannock home following a long illness. George Parry was 95.**

He was one of 6,000 Allied troops taken prisoner in the attempt to seize the bridge at the town in northern Holland, a mission depicted in the film, *A Bridge Too Far*.

Mr Parry, a corporal in the South Staffordshire Regiment, was marched into captivity next to an officer, Lieutenant Jack Reynolds, who famously gave a defiant two-fingered salute to a German cameraman.

Years later Mr Parry recalled: "I remember Lt Reynolds kept making the two-fingered salute and I thought, if he keeps on we are all going to stop a bullet."

The prisoners were taken to camps in Germany and later to Czechoslovakia where they remained until the end of the war in 1945. Mr Parry, of Albert

Street, Chadsmoor, was also a survivor of the botched glider-borne invasion of Sicily in July 1943.

Sixty-five gliders were released early by the towing aircraft and crashed into the sea, drowning about 250 men. His glider made it safely to land.

His daughter Joanne Martin said: "He was very lucky to have survived, especially as he was in gliders."

After the war Mr Parry and his wife Joyce raised five children and had 10 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

### Dedicated

He worked until his retirement as a storekeeper at Joseph Lucas, Cannock. In recent years he had been seen at many regimental events of the 3rd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment (Staffords). He and his wife donated a bench at the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas which was dedicated at a special ceremony.

The funeral is at St. Luke's Church, Cannock at 12.15pm on January 3.

## Singers in fine voice to serenade revellers

SINGERS from a choral group in Cannock surprised night-time revellers with Christmas carols.

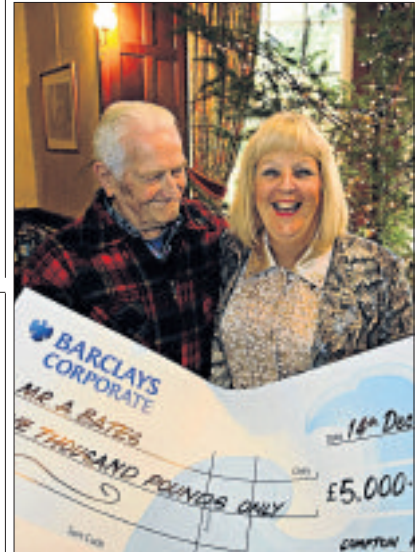
A flashmob of members from the Chase Harmony group performed three festive tunes in the town centre.

The event was run by Staffordshire Police, council staff and firefighters to bring a bit of seasonal cheer to revellers as part of an anti-violence campaign.

John Nicholls, musical director of Chase Harmony, said: "Chase Harmony was pleased to add their support to the campaign."

"We hope the campaign will be a huge success." Footage of the flashmob can be seen on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/xc-Ecz-9It8>

## Albert hits jackpot



Albert Bates is presented with his Compton Hospice lottery win by BGT star Jean Martyn

ORGANIST Jean Martyn presented a charity lottery ticket seller with his jackpot prize.

Albert Bates, of Canterbury Avenue, Willenhall, scooped top prize in the Compton Hospice annual lottery, netting a £5,000. He was presented with his cheque by the Britain's Got Talent finalist, who was born in Lichfield and is a former Cannock music teacher. She now lives in Brewood.

Mr Bates, aged 88, said he was delighted to win the jackpot but he said he would donate a round sum back to the charity. He has regularly sold tickets for the hospice to his own friends and family over the past 10 years.

He said: "It was very nice to win. I haven't decided what to do with the money yet but I will donate some to them. It's a fine thing they do and I've sold tickets for them for years."

Mr Bates is considering splashing out on a holiday to New Zealand to visit relatives.

Each year the hospice sells tickets as part of efforts to raise £6million needed to keep the hospice running.

## Santa Dash raises £2,000

THE organisers of a charity's Santa Dash say more than £2,000 was raised to help local children.

The Newlife event saw around 50 people dress as Santa and dash around Cannock. It was the second such event and chief executive Sheila Brown said: "We are delighted this was bigger and better."

Newlife is looking for local heroes to help raise money to help fund equipment. Call the Community Fundraising team on 0800 988 4640.

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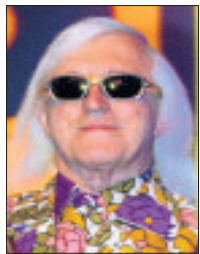
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# The great and good we said goodbye to in 2011



Sir Jimmy Savile



Pete Postlethwaite



Basil D'oliveira



Gerry Rafferty



Susannah York



Nat Lofthouse



Ken Russell



Joe Frazier



Gary Moore



Jane Russell



Elizabeth Taylor



Sir Henry Cooper



Seve Ballesteros



Elisabeth Sladen



Ted Lowe



Trevor Bannister



Amy Winehouse



Peter Falk

## 'enry's 'ammer gone forever

THIS YEAR we said goodbye to one of Britain's biggest celebrities and certainly a larger than life character Sir Jimmy Savile. He was known to generations for his large cigars, Jim'll Fix It and Top of the Pops appearances and of course his tireless charity work.

Acclaimed actor Pete Postlethwaite who starred in massive hit films such as Brassed Off, Aliens and Jurassic Park also died this year.

Among the many shocks were musicians Gerry Rafferty and Amy Wine-

house and from the sporting arena Seve Ballesteros and Welsh soccer boss Gary Speed. We also said goodbye to Hollywood legends Elizabeth Taylor and Jane Russell.

Also gone from the world of screen and theatre are Elisabeth Sladen, aka Dr Who's assistant Sarah Jane Smith, Trevor Bannister, whose most famous role was as Mr Lucas in Are You Being Served? and controversial film director Ken Russell. Sadly one of the co-creators of arguably the greatest

British sitcom David Croft also died. He will be best remembered for the wonderful Dad's Army.

Also dying this year were veteran actresses Susannah York and Maria Schneider. Once again from the world of sport we lost ex-England footballer Nat Lofthouse, snooker commentator Ted Lowe and of course heavyweight boxing legend Our 'enry - Sir Henry Cooper - along with cricketing legend Basil D'Oliveira.

Danny Farragher



Robert Robinson



David Croft

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**6.00** Breakfast. **10.00** New Year's Eve Saturday Kitchen. **11.30** Nigel Slater's Simple Suppers. (R) **12.00** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **12.15** Football Focus. **1.00** Formula 1: 2011 Season Review. **2.00** Film: The Pacific. (2005) Comedy, with Vin Diesel. **3.30** A Question of Sport. (R) **4.00** Final Score. **5.10** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **5.30** Comic Relief 2011: What a Cracker. (R)

**6.25** Winter Wipeout.

Richard Hammond and Amanda Byram present a winter-themed version of Total Wipeout, which sees the contestants tackling an all-new snow-covered course.

**7.25** FILM: Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End. (2007) The swashbuckling rogues join forces with old foe Barbossa to rescue Captain Jack Sparrow from the land of the dead. Adventure sequel, with Johnny Depp.

**10.00** BBC News; Weather. **10.20** Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of today's Premier League clashes, including Swansea City v Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United v Blackburn Rovers.

**11.40** The National Lottery Saturday Night Draws. OJ Borg announces the all-important numbers. **11.50** New Year Live 2011. Jake Humphrey welcomes in 2012.

**12.15** Lee Mack Going Out Live; National Lottery Update. **1.15** Michael McIntyre's Christmas Comedy Roadshow. (R) **2.15** Weatherview. **2.20** BBC News.

**6.00** CBeebies. **7.05** CBBC. **10.05** Film: Home on the Range. (2004) Disney animated comedy, with the voice of Roseanne Barr. **11.15** Film: First Daughter. (2004) Romantic comedy, starring Katie Holmes and Marc Blucas. **12.55** Escape to the Country. (R) **1.35** Film: Viva Knievel! (1977) Adventure, starring Evel Knievel and Lauren Hutton. **3.15** Springwatch Christmas Special. **4.45** Film: The Guns of Navarone. (1961) Second World War adventure, starring Gregory Peck.

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**7.15** Flog It! From Stoke-on-Trent. (R)

**8.00** Morecambe & Wise: The Show What Paul Merton Did. Paul Merton hosts a celebration of the comedy duo. (R)

**9.00** Eric & Ernie. One-off drama about Morecambe and Wise's early years, from their meeting on the children's variety circuit to their first TV appearances. Victoria Wood and Jim Moir star. (R)

**10.30** Parkinson, Morecambe & Wise. Michael Parkinson looks back at his 1972 interview with the comedy duo. (R)

**11.15** Jools' Annual Hootenanny 2011. With Cyndi Lauper, Jessie J, James Morrison and the Vaccines.

**1.30** Glastonbury Best Bits 2011. (R) **3.35** Close.

**6.00** CITV: Mini CITV. **7.25** CITV. **7.55** Film: Scooby-Doo and the Alien Invaders. (2000) Animated adventure, with the voice of Jeff Bennett. **9.25** Monk. **9.30** Horrid Henry. (R) **9.45** Funniest Ever You've Been Framed! (R) **10.45** Coronation Street. **1.30** ITV News; Weather. **1.45** Film: Pride and Prejudice. (2005) Period drama, starring Keira Knightley. **4.05** Film: The Queen. (2006) Oscar-winning biographical drama, starring Helen Mirren.

**6.05** Regional Programmes. **6.15** ITV News; Weather. **6.30** Harry Hill's TV Burp Xmas Special. (R)

**7.00** Westlife: For the Last Time. The boys perform their greatest hits in a farewell special. (R)

**8.00** The Cube. Two more contestants take on the challenge. Last in the series.

**9.00** Brand New It'll Be Alright on the Night 2. Selection of TV bloopers, presented by Griff Rhys Jones.

**10.00** ITV News; Weather.

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**10.15** The Nation's Favourite Bee Gees Song. (R)

**11.45** ITV News and Countdown to 2012.

**12.05** That Was 2011: The ITV News Review of the Year. **1.05** Film: The Blues Brothers. (1980) Comedy, starring John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd; ITV News Headlines. **3.20** In Plain Sight. (R) **4.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.55** ITV Morning News.

**6.00** The Treacle People. (R) **6.10** The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The Hoobs. (R) **7.00** GT Academy. **7.30** Extreme Sailing Series. **8.00** The Morning Line. **8.55** T4: The Big Bang Theory. **9.25** T4: The Big Bang Theory. **9.50** T4: Shipwrecked. The Island. **10.50** T4: Beyoncé Live at Roseland. **11.55** Film: Three Men and a Baby. (1987) Comedy, starring Tom Selleck, Ted Danson and Steve Guttenberg. **1.55** Channel 4 Racing. **3.55** The Simpsons. (R) **4.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.55** Come Dine with Me. (R)

**6.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **6.55** Channel 4 News. **7.05** 4thoughtLive. **7.10** FILM: Porridge. (1979) Comedy spin-off from the TV series, with Ronnie Barker and Richard Beckinsale.

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**9.00** Alan Carr's New Year Spectacular. With Jonathan Ross, David Williams, Heston Blumenthal and JLS.

**11.35** Rude Tube: Epic Christmas. Alex Zane presents the 50 greatest festive internet videos.

**12.40** The Simpsons. **1.10** Film: Invasion of the Body Snatchers. (1956) Sci-fi thriller, starring Kevin McCarthy. **2.30** Southland. **3.15** St Elsewhere. (R) **4.05** Brave New World with Stephen Hawking. (R) **5.00** Brothers & Sisters. (R) **5.50** Sall Mail. (R) **5.55** The Hoobs. (R)

**6.00** Milkshake! **10.00** Impossible? **11.00** World's Strongest Man 2011. (R) **12.00** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **12.55** Ben Hur. (R) **4.35** Film: 21. (2008) Premiere. Drama, starring Kevin Spacey.

**6.55** 5 News Weekend. **7.00** World's Strongest Man 2011. James Richardson and Caroline Pearce present heat five of the finals from Virgata University, North Carolina, where the line-up for the final was set to be decided.

**8.00** TV's 50 Greatest Magic Tricks. A rundown of illusions that have stood the test of time on the small screen, featuring Penn and Teller, Derren Brown, David Blaine, Paul Daniels and new kid on the block Dynamo.

**10.40** FILM: Up the Front. (1972) A cowardly footman is hypnotised into enlisting during the First World War, and ends up being tattooed with secret German plans. Comedy, starring Frankie Howerd and Zsa Zsa Gabor.

**12.25** Comedy Kings: Best of Just for Laughs. With Dara O Brain, Jack Whitehall and Louis CK. (R) **12.50** SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **4.00** Great Artists. Greek artist El Greco. (R) **4.25** Divine Designs. British religious art. (R) **4.50** County Secrets. Historical spotlight on scenic counties in the UK. (R) **5.00** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.10** The Milkshake! Show. Shake has lots of fun with his new bike. (R) **5.35** Thomas & Friends. (R) **5.45** Roary the Racing Car. Flash challenges Roary to a race. (R)

**ITV2**  
**3.45** Film: Free Willy (1993) **6.05** Film: The Polar Express (2004) **8.00** Film: Dante's Peak (1997) **10.00** Celebrity Juice: 2011 - A Juice Odyssey **11.00** Tweets of the Year

**ITV3**  
**3.45** Film: Arthur 2: On the Rocks (1988) **6.00** Agatha Christie's Poirot **7.00** A Royal Year to Remember **8.00** Agatha Christie's Poirot

**ITV4**  
**1.20** Film: The Battle of Midway (1976) **4.00** Film: Horizons West (1952) **5.45** Film: Lonely Are the Brave (1962) **8.00** Film: The Magnificent Seven Ride! (1972) **10.00** Film: Mad Max 2 (1981)

**BBC THREE**  
**7.00** Great Movie Mistakes III: Not in 3D **9.00** Most Annoying People of 2011

**BBC FOUR**  
**7.00** Birmingham Royal Ballet's Cinderella **9.00** Motown at the BBC **10.00** Edinburgh Comedy Live **11.00** Charlie Brooker's 2011 Wipe

**E4**  
**3.30** Sorority Girls **4.35** Desperate Scousewives **5.35** Scrubs **6.35** The Big Bang Theory **7.30** Happy Endings **8.00** How I Met Your Mother **8.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: Mean Girls (2004) **10.50** The Big Bang Theory

**FILM4**  
**3.10** The Lavender Hill Mob (1951) **4.50** The Three Musketeers (1993) **6.55** Footloose (1984) **9.00** Four Lions (2010) Four British Muslims form an incompetent terrorist cell and hatch a scheme to attack the London marathon. Chris Morris' satirical comedy, starring Rizwan Ahmed, Kayvan Novak, Nigel Lindsay, Adeel Akhtar, Arsher Ali, Freya Kalidas and Julia Davis. **11.00** Rushmore (1999) A student causes chaos at a private school when he develops a crush on a teacher. Comedy drama, starring Jason Schwartzman and Bill Murray.

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**6.00** Breakfast. **8.40** Match of the Day. (R) **10.00** Winter Wipeout. (R) **11.00** Film: Mouse Hunt. (1997) Slapstick comedy, starring Lee Evans and Nathan Lane. **12.35** BBC News; Weather. **12.45** The Archbishop of Canterbury's New Year Message. **12.50** Songs of Praise – New Year's Day Big Sing. **1.30** Film: Wallace & Gromit in The Curse of the Were-Rabbit. (2005) Oscar-winning animated adventure, with the voice of Peter Sallis. **2.50** Film: The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian. (2008) Fantasy adventure sequel, starring Ben Barnes. **5.05** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **5.30** Film: Bolt. (2008) Premiere. Animated adventure, with the voice of John Travolta.

**7.00** EastEnders. Extended episode. Pat's friends and family gather by her bedside as her condition deteriorates rapidly – but the person she wants to see most of all, her son David, is not there.

**8.10** Sherlock. New series. Holmes investigates a case of blackmail threatening to topple the monarchy – only to become engaged in a battle of wits with a woman as brilliant as himself.

**9.40** Absolutely Fabulous. Edina tries to win Saffy's respect.

**10.10** BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

**10.35** Adele Live at the Royal Albert Hall. Coverage of the singer in concert in September 2011.

**11.35** FILM: Cold Mountain. (2003) Period drama, starring Nicole Kidman.

**2.00** Weatherview. **2.05** BBC News.

**6.00** CBBC. **9.55** Film: Gun Fury. (1953) Western, starring Rock Hudson. **11.15** New Year's Day Concert from Vienna 2012. **12.40** Film: Dean Spanley. (2008) Comedy, with Sam Neill, Peter O'Toole and Jeremy Northam. **2.15** Film: Force 10 from Navarone. (1978) Second World War adventure sequel, starring Harrison Ford. **4.15** The Archbishop of Canterbury's New Year Message. (R) **4.20** Film: The Eagle Has Landed. (1976) Adventure, with Michael Caine.

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**6.30** You Have Been Watching – David Croft. A tribute to the TV comedy writer. (R)

**7.30** Dad's Army. Captain Mainwaring puts the defence of the realm before personal pride, resulting in problems. Classic comedy with the Home Guard, with Arthur Lowe. (R)

**8.00** Great Barrier Reef. New series. Monty Halls explores the Australian coral reef and the wildlife that inhabits it.

**9.00** A History of Ancient Britain Special: Orkney's Stone Age Temple. A newly discovered 5,000-year-old temple on Orkney.

**10.00** Match of the Day 2. **11.00** QI XL. (R)

**11.45** FILM: Broken Flowers. (2005) Comedy drama, starring Bill Murray.

**12.25** BBC News. **2.30** Close.

**6.00** CITV: Mini CITV. **7.25** CITV. **8.05** Film: Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase. (2001) Animated adventure, with the voice of Bob Bergen. **9.25** Film: Beethoven. (1991) Canine comedy, starring Charles Grodin. **11.00** Film: Licence to Kill. (1989) James Bond spy thriller, starring Timothy Dalton. **1.30** ITV News; Weather. **1.40** Inspector Morse. (R) **3.45** Downton Abbey. (R) **5.45** ITV News; Weather.

**6.00** New You've Been Framed Top 100 Kids! Harry Hill narrates a selection of camcorder calamities and viewers' mobile-phone footage from the archives, featuring messy eaters, troublesome teens and sibling rivalries.

**7.00** FILM: Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince. (2009) Premiere. The wizard must uncover the secrets of Lord Voldemort's past to try to end his reign of terror. Fantasy, starring Daniel Radcliffe.

**9.45** The Unforgettable John Thaw. A tribute to the much-loved actor.

**10.45** ITV News; Weather.

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**11.00** FILM: Analyze This. (1999) Comedy, starring Robert De Niro.

**12.55** Premiership Rugby Union; ITV News Headlines. **1.50** Film: The Whole Ten Yards. (2004) **3.25** ITV Nightscreen. **5.55** ITV Morning News.

**6.20** The Hoobs. (R) **6.45** Film: The Land Before Time. (1988) Animated adventure, with the voice of Gabriel Damon. **8.00** Film: Arctic Tale. (2007) Premiere. Documentary on Arctic wildlife. **9.45** Film: The Bridge on the River Kwai. (1957) Oscar-winning Second World War drama, starring Alec Guinness. **12.50** Channel 4 Racing. **3.20** Film: True Grit. (1969) Western, starring John Wayne. **5.45** Channel 4 News. **5.55** 4thought.tv.

**6.00** Deal or No Deal. Beat-the-banker game show.

**7.00** Come Dine with Me. Sheila Whelan Duffy hosts the first dinner party in Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

**8.00** The Hotel. New series. Documentary exploring life at the Grosvenor Hotel, Torquay.

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**9.00** Bear's Wild Weekend with Jonathan Ross. Survival expert Bear Grylls takes the chat show host to little-known Canary Island La Palma, where they trek through dense jungle and walk down an active volcano.

**10.00** Hacks. **11.05** Big Fat Quiz of the Year 2011. (R)

**11.00** American Football Live. A match from the final weekend of the season. **4.45** Road to London 2012: That Paralympic Show. (R) **5.10** Post Modern Pastimes. (R) **5.25** Brothers & Sisters. (R)

**6.00** Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Fifi and the Flowertots. (R) **6.25** Fireman Sam. (R) **6.40** Harry and His Bucket Full of Dinosaurs. (R) **6.50** Castle Farm. (R) **6.55** Igan Ogam. (R) **7.05** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.15** The Milkshake! Show. (R) **7.35** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.45** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **7.50** Little Princess. (R) **8.05** Mio Mao. (R) **8.10** Olivia. (R) **8.25** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **8.30** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.40** Angelina Ballerina. **8.55** Rupert Bear. (R) **9.05** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** The Mr Men Show. (R) **9.30** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **9.40** Mist: Sheepdog Tales. (R) **10.00** Meals in Moments. (R) **10.15** Meerkat Manor. (R) **10.45** The Top 10 Aussie Soap Moments 2011. **11.45** World's Strongest Man 2011. (R) **12.45** Film: Seven Brides for Seven Brothers. (1954) Musical Western, starring Howard Keel. **2.50** Film: The Wizard of Oz. (1939) Musical fantasy, starring Judy Garland. **4.55** Film: Return to Oz. (1985) Fantasy adventure, starring Fairuzza Balk.

**6.55** 5 News Weekend. **7.00** World's Strongest Man 2011. The final from Wingate University, North Carolina.

**8.00** An Audience with Dame Edna: 1980. (R)

**9.15** Most Shocking Celebrity Moments of 2011. (R)

**12.10** The Truth About Cheryl Cole. (R) **1.10** SuperCasino. **4.00** Meals in Moments. (R) **4.10** Nick's Quest. (R) **4.35** Divine Designs. (R) **5.00** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.10** The Milkshake! Show. (R) **5.35** Thomas & Friends. (R) **5.45** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

**ITV2** **2.45** Film: Richie Rich (1994) **4.45** Film: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005) **7.00** All Star Family Fortunes Christmas Special **8.00** The Cube Celebrity Special **9.00** Film: I Am Legend (2007) **11.00** Film: Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991)

**ITV3** **3.50** Film: Carry On Camping (1969) **5.45** Film: Doc Hollywood (1991) **7.45** Lewis. A woman's murder is copied from the pages of a novel. **9.45** Film: Sophie's Choice (1982)

**ITV4** **3.20** Film: The Battle of Midway (1976) **6.00** Film: 633 Squadron (1964) **8.00** Premiership Rugby Union **9.00** Film: Nighthawks (1981) **11.00** Film: Coogan's Bluff (1968)

**BBC THREE** **7.00** Film: WALL-E (2008) **8.30** BURN.E **8.40** Pox: 25 Magic Moments **9.40** Film: Ratatouille (2007) **11.20** EastEnders

**BBC FOUR** **7.00** New Year's Day Concert from Vienna 2012 **9.00** Film: Half a Sixpence (1967) **11.20** Come Bell Ringing with Charles Hazlewood

**E4** **3.45** Being Erica **4.40** Samantha Who? **5.10** Film: Black Knight (2001) **7.00** Film: Crocodile Dundee (1986) **9.00** World's Greatest Body Shockers – Part 1 **10.00** Tim Minchin: Ready for This? **11.45** PhoneShop

**FILM4** **2.10** Journey to the Center of the Earth (2008) **4.00** Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian (2009) **6.05** Transformers (2007) Sci-fi action adventure, starring Shia LaBeouf and Megan Fox. **8.50** The Iron Lady Interview Special **9.00** Ferris Bueller's Day Off (1986) A cocky teenager plays truant from school and spends the day dragging his friends into all manner of adventures in the big city. Comedy, with Matthew Broderick and Jennifer Grey. **11.00** Scary Movie (2000)

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**BBC1** 6.00 Breakfast 9.15 Wanted Down Under. 10.00 Homes Under the Hammer. BBC News; Weather. 11.00 Saints and Strangers. 11.45 Britain's Empty Homes. BBC 1 12.00 The Big Breakfast. BBC News; Weather. 1.30 Regional News; Weather. 1.45 Doctors. 2.15 Escape to the Country. 3.00 BBC News; Weather; Regional News. 3.05 CBBC. 5.15 Pointless. 6.00 BBC News; Weather. 6.30 Regional News; Weather. 6.55 The Big Breakfast. Mastermind. 7.30 A Question of Sport; (R) BBC News; Regional News. 8.00 EastEnders. 8.30 The One Lenny Henry. 9.00 Hustle. 10.00 BBC News. 10.25 Regional News. Weather. 10.35 The Graham Norton Show. 11.00 The National Lottery. Friday. 11.00 The Big Breakfast. BBC News; Weather. 11.10 Weatherview. 1.15 Sign Zone: Natural World: The Woman Who Swims With Killer Whales. (R) 2.15 James May's Man Lab. (R) 3.15 MasterChef: The

**BBC2** 6.00 CBeebies. 7.00 CBBC. 8.25 CBeebies. 11.30 Film: Stolen Summer. (2002) Drama, starring Aidan Quinn. 1.00 One Man and His Campervan. (R) 1.30 To Buy or Not to Buy. (R) 2.15 Weakest Link. 3.00 Real Rescues. (R) 3.45 Flog It! 4.30 Perfection. 5.15 Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is. 6.00 Eggheads. 6.30 Great British Railway Journeys. 7.00 Great Barrier Reef. (R) 8.00 Mastermind. 8.30 Mastermind. 9.00 Sicily Unpacked. 10.00 QI. (R) 10.30 Newsnight. 11.00 Weather. 11.05 Film: 50 Dead Men Walking.

**Sturgess. 12.55** Film: **Baoufrot**. (2007) **Premiere**. Israeli war drama, starring **Oshri Cohen**. **2.55** BBC News. **3.35** Close.

**ITV1** **6.00** Daybreak. **8.30** Lorraine. **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. **10.30** This Morning. **12.30** Loose Women. **1.30** ITV News; Weather. **1.55** Regional News; Weather. **2.00** Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) **3.00** Lewis. (R) **4.59** Regional Weather. **5.00** The Chase. **6.00** Regional News; Weather. **6.30** ITV News; Weather. **7.00** Emmerdale. **7.30** Coronation Street. **8.00** Safari Vet School. **8.30** Coronation Street. **9.00** Law & Order: UK. **10.00** ITV News at Ten; Weather. **10.30**

**Regional News, Weather, 10.30** [R] **Be Alright on the Night**, 11.30 **Celebrity Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?**, New Year Special, (R) **12.30** **The Zone**, TV News Headlines, **2.30** **Film: Deliverance**, (R) **2.45** **TV News**, **3.30** **TV News**, **4.20** **TV Nightscreen**, **5.30** **TV Morning News**.

**Channel 4** **6.00** **The Treacle People** (R) **6.10** **The Hoobs**, (R) **6.35** **The Hoobs**, (R) **7.00** **Freshly Squeezed**, **7.30** **Perfect Cops**, **7.55** **According to Jim**, (R) **8.20** **Crime Investigation**, **8.35** **Celebrity Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?**, (R) **9.00** **Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Loves Raymond**, (R) **9.20** **Frasier**, (R) **9.55** **The Big Bang Theory**, (R) **10.25** **Film: Hello, Dolly!** (1969) **10.55** **Film: The Untouchables**, (R) **11.10** **Film: Total Drama** (1970) **Fact-based**, **Second World War** **World War**, starring **Monty Bismarck**, **4.00** **Deal or No Deal**, **5.00** **Celebrity Come Dine with Me**, **5.30** **TV News**, **6.00** **TV News**, **6.30** **TV News**, **7.00** **Channel 4 News**, **7.25** **4thoughtTV**, **7.30** **Come Dine with Me**, **8.00** **TV News**, **8.30** **New Girl**, **9.00** **TV News**, **9.30** **TV News**, **10.00** **Film: Big Trouble in Little China**, (1986) **Comedy** **fantasy** **adventure**, starring **Kurt Russell**, **1.55** **Random Acts**, **2.00** **Lucky Escape**, (R) **2.05** **My Name Is Earl**, **2.10** **TV News**, **2.15** **TV News**, **2.20** **Elsewhere**, (R) **4.20** **Hugh's Fish Fight**, (R) **5.15** **Brothers & Sisters**, (R).

**Channel 5** **6.00** **Milkshake!** **10.00** **Animal Rescue Squad**, (R)

**11.15** 5 News Luncheon. **11.25** Celebrity Big Brother: Launch Show. (R) **12.15** Magic Beyond Words: The JK Rowling Story. (R) **3.15** Film: Relative Stranger. (2009) Drama, starring Eric La Salle. **5.00** 5 News at 5. **5.30** Chinese Food in Minutes. (R) **6.00** Eddie Stobart: Trucks and Trailers. (R) **6.55** 5 News. **7.00** Charley Boorman's Extreme Frontiers. (R) **5** News Update. **8.00** World's Toughest Truckers. (R) **8.55** Drivers navigate treacherous roads. **9** News at **9.00** Celebrity Big Brother. **10.00** Celebrity Wedding Planner. **11.00** Celebrity Big Brother's Bit on the Side. **12.00** SuperCasino. **4.05** Motorsport Mundial. **4.30** Michaela's Wild Challenge. (R) **4.55** County Secrets. (R) **5.10** Wildlife SOS. (R)



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## Deaths

### COLLEY

Benjamin Joseph

Passed away December 14, aged 86 years.

Funeral Service took place at St Luke's Church, Cannock.

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What it has been to live all these 64 years in your heart and companionship no words can convey, no more tomorrows for us to share but oh what a joy our yesterdays were.

Love as ever, Mollie.  
Always in our thoughts.

'To the world you were but one, to us you were the world.'

From your loving Children and Grandchildren Stephen, Sarah, Jane, John, Laura, Mike, David and Louis.

### HODGSON

Ruth

Of Hednesford. Passed away in hospital, with her Family at her side on December 17, 2011, aged 77 years.

The devoted Wife of George and beloved Mother of George, David and Ken also a loving Grandmother, Mother-in-law and Friend.

Service will be held at St Saviour's Church, Hednesford, on Wednesday, January 4, at 10.15am, followed by Committal at Stafford Crematorium.

Family flowers only, donations to Help for Heroes c/o Funeral Directors.

Ruth is now resting in a private Chapel of Repose in Brindley Hall Funeral Home.

All inquiries to FARAGHER MAGUIRE Family Funeral Directors Brindley House 75 Broadhurst Green Hednesford Telephone 01543 879866.

### JONES

Irene

Of Hednesford.

Reunited with Husband John.

Passed away peacefully on December 18, 2011, aged 98 years.

Sadly missed by all the Family.

Funeral Service on Friday, December 30, at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Hednesford, at 10am, followed by the Interment in the Churchyard.

Further inquiries to  
GEORGE STACEY  
Funeral Directors  
30 Greenheath Road  
Hednesford.  
Telephone 01543 422524.

### KITCHENS

Raymond

Of Cheslyn Hay, sadly passed away on December 17, 2011, aged 68 years.

His Funeral Service will take place on Tuesday, January 3, 2012 at 10am, at Bushbury Crematorium.

All inquiries to

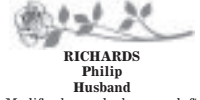
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### RICHARDS

Philip

Husband

My life changed when you left me, I feel so lost it's true, though I have the Family around me I'm really missing you.

From loving Wife Bridget. X X X

**Dad and Grandad**  
Little did we know that morning God was going to call your name. In life we loved you dearly, in death we do the same.

It broke our hearts to lose you but you did not go alone, for part of us went with you the day God called you home.

You left us peaceful memories, your love is still our guide and though we cannot see you, you are always by our side.

All our love, always.  
Son David, Daughter-in-law Emma, Grandchildren Chloe and Gerrard.  
X X X X

### RICHARDS

Philip

Dad

The moment that you died my heart was torn in two, one side filled with heartache, the other died with you.

I often lie awake at night, when the world is fast asleep and take a walk down memory lane, with tears upon my cheeks.

Remembering you is easy, I do it every day but missing you is heartache that never goes away. I hold you tightly within my heart and there you will remain.

Love, brokenhearted Daughter Beverley, Mark, Amy and Ryan.  
X X X

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Telephone  
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**Or call into our Cannock office**  
at Queens Square, Cannock

### SCOTT

Terence Henry

Of Great Wyrley.

Passed away on Monday, December 19, 2011, aged 70 years.

Will be sadly missed.

The Funeral Service will take place at Bushbury Crematorium on Monday, January 9, 2012, at 10.30am.

Family flowers only with donations if desired c/o The Funeral Home.

All further inquiries to  
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Great Wyrley,  
Walsall,  
WS8 6NQ.  
Telephone 01922 419090.

### WINCHESTER

Esther

Of Lichfield, passed away peacefully in hospital on December 15, 2011, aged 82 years.

A beloved Mum, Grandma, Great-Grandma, Sister, Aunt, Mother-in-law and Friend.

Service will be held at Sutton Crematorium, on Tuesday, January 3, 2012, at 11.30am.

Family flowers only donations to The British Heart Foundation c/o Funeral Director. Esther is now resting in a private Chapel of Repose at Brindley House Funeral Home.

All inquiries to  
FARAGHER MAGUIRE  
Family Funeral Directors  
Brindley House  
75 Broadhurst Green  
Hednesford  
Telephone 01543 879866.

## In Memoriam

### AINGER

Aaron

Our wonderful Son

April 7, 1988 to December 27, 2008.

If we could have one more lifetime wish, one dream that could come true, we'd ask with all our hearts for yesterday and you.

Aaron, we love and miss you every second of every day, that love will bind us for eternity.

Love, Mum and Jed.

**Our Brother**

Three years without you. It has and never will be the same.

It feels like a lifetime since we got to tell you we love you. Christmas is not Christmas without you.

Always in our hearts, little big man.

Love you always, Merry Christmas.

Love, Elise and Theo.

**Grandson**

December 27.

You are not just a memory or part of the past, you are ours to remember as long as life lasts.

A bond so strong it will not go away because we love and miss you more each day. Love, brokenhearted Nan and Grandad Till and Peter.

X X

His light shines on. Another sad year without you Aaron but you are always in our thoughts and in the thread of our lives.

With love and remembrance from Viv, Karen and John.

## thechronicle

### Solar panels contract up for grabs

A £1 MILLION contract is up for grabs for a Staffordshire firm to install solar panels on 20 county council buildings.

The authority is ploughing ahead with the scheme and needs to appoint a contractor quickly so it can be completed before the Government slashes payments for introducing the technology.

Tariffs will be cut from April and the council is seeking a Staffordshire firm or firms to carry out the works. It is hoped to save £27,000 in electricity bills a year.

The scheme will bring in £57,000 in annual payments, from the Government's feed-in tariff brought in to stimulate the market. After loan repayment charges and

other operating costs, the council will receive a combined income and fuel saving of £6,000 a year.

About 30 buildings have been identified as suitable for solar panels - mainly offices, libraries and depots.

### Economy

Environment boss Councillor Mark Winnington said: "We will be working with local private companies to install the panels, which boosts the local economy."

"We want to make sure we take every opportunity to bring benefits to the people of Staffordshire, and by investing in solar panels on our buildings we can do just that."

### Old pupils foster new relationships



L to r: Old school friends and founder members of the Nimrod club; Monica Peake, Dave Heathcote, Betty Griffiths, Trevor Bate, Pat Young, Mick Foster, Nita Grocott, Keith Wiggin, Dennis Harper

FORMER pupils of Great Wyrley Secondary School are expanding their group to revive even more old friendships.

For the past seven years the Nimrod Club, as it is commonly known, meet each quarter to catch up with their former classmates who left the school in 1960.

The club has recently been extended to welcome others who left between 1958 and

1960. During their latest Christmas 50s and 60s dinner dance, more than 60 people attended, most which have been members since the club was first formed.

The reunions are held at Old Wyrley Hall, Olde Hall Lane. Anyone who left between 1958 and 1960 is encouraged to get in touch, for more details call Mick (Fub) Foster on 07989 566575.

### YAPP

Mark

Three years, January 2.  
Still love and miss you every day. In our hearts, always and forever.

Also remembering your birthday, January 28.

Love you always my Son.

Mom, John and Family.

X X X

## Acknowledgements

### GALLEAR

George

The Family of the late George Gallear would like to thank Relatives, Friends and Neighbours for their support and generous donations to St. Giles' Hospice.

### RICHARDS

Philip

The Family would like to thank everyone for attending Philip's Funeral, also for cards, flowers and donations for Air Ambulance for which total amount will be disclosed at a later date.

### SHAW

James Alfred

Son Melvyn and Daughter Caro would like to thank Family, kind Friends and Neighbours for their cards of sympathy and donations to the Alzheimer's Society.

Our special thanks to the Vicarage Court Nursing Home for the care they gave to Jim during the last year.

Also grateful thanks to the Reverend Duncan Leake for the lovely Service at Streetly Crematorium and to the Funeral Director, Vincent Williams and Staff of Middleton and Wood, Burntwood for their care and courtesy. God bless you all.

# Police chief in pledge on changes

POLICE officers in Staffordshire will be able to handle more than 20 times as many crimes in a shift when they are withdrawn from the streets to man phones, a senior officer says.

As part of a radical shake-up of policing in the county some officers will come off the beat, dealing with less serious offences over the phone. Police who remain on patrol will consider "alternatives to arrest" such as solving neighbour disputes through talks and issuing instant fines.

Deputy Chief Constable Douglas Paxton said taking details of crimes over the phone would result in a "huge productivity gain".

### Shift

The changes have already been rolled out in the north of Cannock, Lichfield and Rugeley from January 30. Mr Paxton said an officer on the phone could deal with up to 48 crimes in an eight-hour shift - compared to two on patrol.

"What we have learned is that an officer on the phone can deal with five to six incidents in an hour," he said. "That compares to an

average of one to two incidents in an eight-hour shift on patrol. That is a huge productivity gain."

He added police staff could eventually replace officers manning the phones.

"We have found the public are reassured by speaking with a police officer," he said. "In the future we will need to see if we can get that same level of satisfaction from speaking with a member of police staff instead."

The Staffordshire force is reducing the number of its officers from 2,100 to 1,800 by 2015, with many posts being retired after 30 years of service.

Under the raft of changes, a specialist investigations unit will be launched. The new 18-strong team will begin gathering evidence within minutes of an arrest to try to ensure they have enough to charge suspects before officers have to release them on bail.

Officers arrested two men, aged 48 and 53, on suspicion of cultivating the drug and both were bailed pending further inquiries to a date in March.

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**cars under £1500**

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**PEUGEOT 106** 1.1, 3dr hatchback, 1998, red, low mileage. Tax and MoT, manual, female owner. £750 ovno. 07707 655819.

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## Visit to Mikes is fruitless yet again

HEATH HAYES failed to collect anything from their Midlands Alliance visit to The Trevor Brown Memorial Ground to face Boldmere St Michaels – this being their sixth fruitless visit in the last two seasons.

Hayes, once more having to rely on youngsters due to injuries and suspensions, were up against it from the start. However, there were some encouraging performances, notably from Sam McNulty who performed well on his debut in goal.

The Mikes had the better of the early play and took a ninth-minute lead courtesy of Lyndon Willers' fine solo effort.

To their credit, Hayes were not deterred by this setback and with better finishing could have gone in level at the break.

Dave Waple will still be wondering how he managed to put one gilt-edged opportunity wide.

The second half was quite entertaining but neither side created anything worth while although Hayes looked as if they had salvaged a point when deep into injury time Ben Haseley lobbed the keeper only for the ball to roll agonisingly wide.

Hayes return to action on Monday when they host Tidvale (3pm).

## Clark eyes an upset

CIARAN CLARK is relishing the prospect of a trip to Chelsea on New Year's Eve despite Villa's poor record against the big boys.

The claret and blues have lost all of this season's meetings with the other five members of the Premier League top six, which makes the match at Stamford Bridge a daunting prospect.

But Clark, who has just broken back into the team, has fond memories of last season's game where his late goal secured a point for Villa in a thrilling 3-3 draw.

And even though the odds are stacked against Alex McLeish's side, the versatile 22-year-old believes Villa have the potential to take something from the game.

"That was a good day, but we should have won the game," said Clark.

"Our side's good enough to beat anyone. We've just got to stick together and hopefully we can go down there and keep a good defensive shape like we did at Stoke."



A challenge on Hednesford keeper Dan Crane results in the only goal of the game



Chasetown survive a goalmouth scramble on their way to a vital 1-0 success

# BRINDLEY TARGETS DERBY DAY DOUBLE

**CHASETOWN manager Chris Brindley has targeted a derby double over two of his former clubs as the Scholars look to build on their win at Hednesford with victory over Rushall Olympic.**

Brindley's men host the Pits at the Scholars Ground on January 2 with one derby success already under their belts over the festive season, at Keys Park on Boxing Day.

Darren Stride's goal won it as Brindley had the last laugh at his former club, where he scored the winner in the FA Trophy final of 2004 and was manager from June of that year to December 2005. Now the Scholars boss is looking to put one over on another of his former teams when Rushall come to town for a Bank Holiday showdown.

Brindley, who was assistant boss at Rushall from 2007 to 2008, said: "I was delighted with the win, Hednesford are a top team and our lads worked their socks off. Credit to them, it was a great result for our club."

"We have just got to keep going at Rushall, we have got a good record against them the last couple of years but they are always tight games."

"Everybody has played with each other over the last few years so we know everything about each other. It might not be a classic, but it will be a highly competitive game."

"They are having a great season, their first in this league, they are a very committed side, they have done a great job so far."

"But we go into the game with confidence."

Brindley has fond memories of his time at Dales Lane, where he was No 2 to Paul Holleran for the second half of the 2006-07 season and again for the following campaign.

The 42-year-old was then lured away by his former Wolves team-mate Steve Bull, who was manager at Stafford Rangers, with Brindley taking up the Marston Road hot-seat later that year.

He said: "I had a good

**By Craig Birch**

time there, they are a great bunch of people on the committee at Rushall and it was an enjoyable period for me.

"I am pleased they are doing well."

A bumper Boxing Day crowd of 1,606 saw Pitmen legend Brindley go away with the spoils.

Dean Perrow's corner, floated into the near post, was bundled over the line by Stride as Hednesford goalkeeper Dan Crane struggled to catch the ball on 22 minutes.

## Imperious

An expectant Keys Park willed the home side to grab an equaliser but ex-Pitmen Richard Teesdale and Jimmy Turner were imperious at the back as Hednesford failed to force an equaliser.

The first period saw a defensively set-up Scholars play deep in their own half as the Pitmen looked to make the most of regular possession with the unsure Ryan Price fumbling a Chris Clements shot on 19 minutes. Darren Campion headed just wide from the resulting corner.

Elliott Durrell shot wide across goal as Price scrambled for the ball on 22 min-

utes and a minute later Perrow flicked a header past the post for Chasetown.

Despite struggling to break down the Chasetown defence, Clements and Durrell both forced Price into saves before the only goal of the game.

As the temperature dropped and a cold wind froze the Keys Park faithful, Rob Smith's men tried in vain to equalise. The visitors saw Stride and Perrow shoot wide when well placed before Price proved himself a Scholars hero in the final minute.

Clements delivered two corners in succession and Chasetown hacked clear on both occasions before Durrell broke free but Price was there to deny the striker as Hednesford's long unbeaten home run came to an end.

The away side came to Keys Park with the intention of closing down and harrying the Hednesford midfield and did well to nullify the threat of the usually dangerous Jamey Osborne and Clements.

Kyle Haynes showed real impetus in the opening half with marauding runs down the right flank but Smith's side failed to make their possession pay with a goal.



An aerial challenge during the Boxing Day derby at Keys Park. Pictures: Dave Birt

## Wolves ace says 'Give us a break'

WOLVES winger Stephen Hunt has called for winter breaks to be introduced in the Premier League.

Hunt believes a 10-day holiday is needed to stop our international teams under-performing in summer tournaments.

The 30-year-old is likely to be in Ireland's squad for next summer's Euro 2012 tournament in Poland and Ukraine and believes a break is vital to bring England and Ireland in line with the rest of Europe, with many countries shutting down at this time of year.

"If England and Ireland have had tournaments after the rest of the countries have had their winter break and are fresher, people will hammer the English and the Irish players if they haven't performed," said Hunt.

"But, if that happens, there will be a reason."

"Other countries are clever enough to do it – every other country in Europe does it."

"We're the bravehearts who go and play, but we criticise the English team when they're tired. I love playing football – but you've got to have a brain sometimes."

"The FA are happy to take people's money over Christmas, but if they just had 10 days off, they'd get full houses anyway."

"At the last World Cup Fabio Capello called for a break, and if it's coming from his mouth, maybe they should listen."

## Friendly win for Cannock

CANNOCK Rugby Club's first XV will take on Handsworth in a friendly this Saturday (1.30pm) after beating the same opposition last weekend.

Scott Pedley scored the first of Cannock's three tries after 10 minutes and also added the conversion.

Two second-half tries from Matt Madsen after 50 and 55 minutes helped seal a 17-8 success in the friendly fixture at Handsworth.

Cannock return to Midlands 4 West (North) league action on January 7 when they host Barton-Under-Needwood.

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford, Thursday, December 29, 2011.

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## Unmissable **HALF PRICE** offers from Leekes, the home experts



Local home department store Leekes of Bilston have just unveiled their biggest ever sale.

There's an impressive array of half price offers on a whole host of essentials for every room in the home - including sofas, beds, kitchens, bathrooms, dining sets, accessories and more.

And, having recently celebrated their first, very successful year of trading in the Midlands, Managing

Director Emma Leeke commented: "This winter we wanted to offer our customers something unmissable - and with more half price offers than ever before, I think we've succeeded."

"My team have carefully selected an exciting yet practical mix of home essentials which combine quality, practicality, style - and affordability."

Before 2nd January, customers will also receive a **store voucher worth 10%\*** of their Leekes purchase when they spend £50 or more.

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**IN STORE VOUCHERS  
ENDS THIS WEEKEND**

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# Top half price offers

Emma Leeke's top picks in the Leekes winter sale include:

## Dyson DC25i

Upright vacuum cleaner with cyclone and ball technology.  
Was £359 | Sale **£179**

## Jamie Oliver by Tefal

16cm saucepan with lid.  
Was £54 | Sale **£27**

## Casa Mirage

Black wall hung electric fire.  
Was £299 | Sale **£149**

## Morphy Richards

Two slice stainless steel toaster.  
RRP £39.99 | Sale **£19.99**

## Brushed Steel Kettle

RRP £59.99 | Sale **£29.99**

## Christy Charlton Gold

Jacquard design double duvet cover in rich gold tones.  
RRP £125 | Sale **£62.50**

## Casa Rachael

Sleek white acrylic curved freestanding bath.  
Was £999 | Sale **£499**



# Hot looks for homes in 2012!

Jo Griffiths Interior Design Consultant at Leekes picks her highlights from the latest collections and shows you how to get the look for your lounge for less.



- 1 The Casa Pedro sofas are in this season's hottest shade of teal and great value at £899 for a three and two seater sofa set.
- 2 Make a real style statement with this silver Stella starburst clock; half price at £15.
- 3 Co-ordinate with these funky little table lamps available in ivory or teal - now half price at just £15 each.
- 4 Add assorted scatter cushions in contrasting shades to bring extra luxe to your look; only £5 each.

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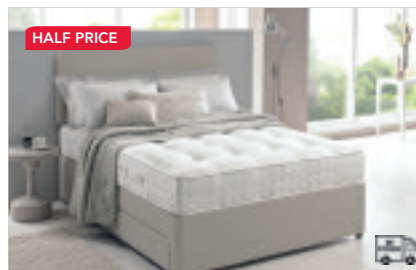


## Casa Warwick

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# There's more than you might expect at Leekes

With 35 departments over two floors and quite literally thousands of products to choose from, it's no wonder Leekes of Bilston is proving a popular destination.

With so much choice and variety, it really is worth taking the time to investigate just what is available in the West Midlands' largest new department store. You'll be surprised!

As well as the wide range of sofas, dining sets, beds and bedroom furniture available on the furniture floor and the state of the art kitchen, bathroom and conservatory studios, there is also a large range of accessories to provide your finishing touches and help you shop for everything you need, under one roof.

Store Manager Tony Squires sums up the Leekes approach: "We don't just sell bathrooms - but also the

tiles, paint, towels, lights and accessories to complete your look; and this the case for every room in your home."

"You'll even find fitness equipment to kick start your new year regime and leisure clothing from leading brands like Animal, Weird Fish, Protest, Craghoppers, Regatta and O'Neill."

The store also offers a modern and comfortable café serving teas, coffees and a range of hot and cold snacks including freshly prepared sandwiches and baked potatoes.

## Superb sale savings on these BIG brands



## Leekes home department store at Bilston



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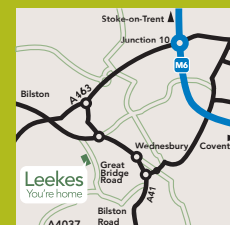
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An orangery, with its partially solid construction and signature lantern style roof provides the perfect solution for a kitchen extension, dining room or multi purpose space in which to relax. By adding a large expanse of bi-folding doors or patio sliders across one aspect, you can enjoy easy access to your garden and truly invite the outdoors in.

Alternatively, Leekes offer a wide range of conservatories from the more traditional white or wood grain to a range of coloured foil finishes and even tiled roof options. Our 3m x 3m Casa conservatory starts from **only £9,995**.

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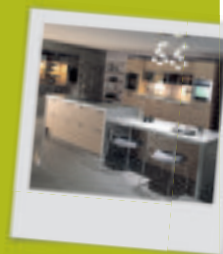


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